

TOWN OF GROTON  
WORK SESSION  
May 10, 2016

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

Christina called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm, Bob 2<sup>nd</sup>, so voted.

***Meeting with Mark Stetson and Rick Simula***

In Attendance: Mark, Rick, John, Bob, Christina and Sara

Rick Simula started off by explaining that he and Mark Stetson are in agreement that it should come out of current use. However, they are not in agreement on the amount of the tax. Avitar has the land assessed at \$23,000, but Rick thinks it should only be valued at \$15,000. Christina explained that based on her experience with assessing in Bristol the \$15,000 is too low. It was explained that the first acre always has the higher value.

Mark said that based on the review that Avitar did, that acre should be the \$23,000.

We compared his land to both the Plumer and Powell properties, as Rick said the values went down after Avitar reviewed. The properties did not go down because of land value, but due to other changes.

Christina explained that he filled out the abatement and Mark was waiting until this meeting to send his recommendation to the Board. Christina asked Mark if the Select Board can decide not to charge the interest and payments but we cannot stop the lien process. Mark said he is not sure what the legalities are regarding the lien process, but the Board can abate for just cause. We would have to investigate this a little bit more to determine what steps are available to the Board.

Christina explained that the Board will not have an answer today, but as one member of the Board she would be willing to consider waiving the interest and working out a payment plan. We will also look into the lien process. We will take care of a few things on our end and Mark will send his recommendation as well as the RSA with the information he thinks we should use.

Rick thinks it is a conflict of interest to compare the properties in Town because Avitar set these values. He thinks there should be a 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Mark explained that the values are based on the sales which Avitar has nothing to do with. Christina also explained that the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) reviews the assessments and the work that Avitar does on a yearly basis to make sure they are following the guidelines.

Rick Simula asked what his benefit is to paying this \$2,300.00. Christina explained that this is a one-time charge and he can do whatever he wants with that acre since it is out of current use. He asked what if he builds on the second acre. It was explained that that acre will have to come out of current use but it would be at the lower rate.

Rick said he is getting the feeling that this is set in stone. Christina said that is not the case. We will wait for Mark's decision and then the Board will also have to talk about this and then make a decision. Rick asked if he would be allowed to make payments. Christina said that the Board could consider approving that option, but we are not sure if we can do anything about the lien.

Rick asked why he wasn't told about the current use. Christina explained that the realtor is supposed to tell the buyers about this. Rick explained that they didn't use a realtor but the owner didn't explain the current use process.

Rick asked why this was decided now. Mark explained that it is because of the camper. There is a new law that started that the camper needs to be assessed if it remains on the property for 3 months or more. The camper itself is not being assessed because it can move in and out so he needs to make sure he moves it, but the gravel base for the camper etc, keyed the assessor to remove from current use.

Christina wrapped up the meeting by stating we will do everything we can to help him out but we have to follow the law. Bob stated that we would like to work with him but our hands are tied due to laws and such. Rick said the financial end of this has put his future in jeopardy. Mark stated that he would have his recommendation to us within a week. The Select Board will review this information and then he will be contacted with the decision. Christina also told Rick that if he ends up with any more questions or information he can contact Sara.

#### *Assessing Standard Board (ASB)*

Currently, under section (c) the standards for revaluations are based on USPAP Standard 6. This is the report writing necessary for mass appraisals. The DRA proposes to drop the words "standard 6" meaning we, as Assessors would then need to comply with all of USPAP (Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice). While this appears a harmless, minor change, it is far from that and will ultimately cost municipalities a tremendous amount of money to comply. This means an in depth appraisal must be completed whenever a value opinion is offered, whether it be for a taxpayer's estimate of what his new home is worth, or the land use change tax recommendation that is needed for land coming out of current use, or any "special use" properties, this would include utility properties. The DRA has recently stated to Avitar in written communication that Utility properties are not part of the mass appraisal and would be more appropriately valued as a special purpose property under standards one and two of USPAP. These standards were developed for Appraisers. While Standard 6 has focused on report writing for mass appraisal, the remaining standards were not intended for Assessors to follow largely, as I believe it is cost prohibitive and limiting to a municipality.

Simply put, if this change is voted in and then moves through the legislative process to become law, it will cost town's additional money and limit the work the Assessor can do. There have been attempts to pass this sort of legislation in the past but the ASB has not previously taken a vote or a position on it. If the ASB approves this language change, it will merely make it easier to pass through into law as it has the support of the assessing standards board.

Mark asked that we respond to the email indicating that they can represent the town before the ASB at the next meeting. Sara will respond to the email.

#### ***Building Committee***

In Attendance: Slim Spafford, Robert "Bubba" Ellis, Glen Hanson, EJ Thompson, John, Bob, Christina and Sara

The building committee met at the property across from the Transfer Station which is the proposed future home of the Highway Garage. Sara had created packets for everyone that included the original plot plans from the subdivision, the plot plan zoomed in to focus only on this property, the DOT driveway permit and copies of the proposed drawings that Bubba did.

The first focus was the driveway. There is currently a driveway permit filed with NH DOT. We reviewed the dimensions and the plots and marked out the 25 feet of driveway based on that. It was agreed that we are going to have to cut down quite a few trees and grade back the shoulder to the telephone pole. Christina is going to contact Dave Flynn and see if there is any way to get the driveway extended to 30 feet and if it can be moved.

The committee walked the property to see where it would be best to put test pits because this needs to be done before it can be decided where the building is going. It was decided that 10 test pits will be completed. It was also decided that the building should probably be 120x80 instead of 100x80.

It was agreed that the Police Department and Animal Control will be combined with the Highway Department. Depending on where the building can be placed, we may need to change the drawings around so that the Highway Department is located near the salt sheds. EJ will look over what was suggested and see if it is okay based on Police regulations.

Slim had originally mentioned looking into solar panels. He did find out that the solar panels could not go on the roof this high up but that they could possibly go on the hill.

Christina will reach out to Boyd Smith from NLRA to discuss the watershed and see if they had any questions or concerns regarding the location for the Highway Department. Sara will reach out to Suzanne Wall to check on the well and if it could be moved or if this would cause any issues and if she has any other feedback. Glen and Roger will do the test pits in about 1 ½ weeks. Bubba will draw up any changes on his plans.

The building committee will be meeting again on June 7, 2016 at 6:00pm at the Town House.

### ***Highway Concern***

The new 8 foot York rake has been left outside at the Highway Department and needs to be moved inside. Also the gates need to be moved to opposite side behind porta potty at the Transfer Station. Sara will mention this to Glen and have Glen check with Richard.

### ***Security System***

We originally had 123 Lock and Key. It was bought out by Main Security. Bob McArthur who originally owned 123 has opened another company which is Advanced Lock and Alarm. We have been having a lot of issues with the new owners being so far away and letting things take so long to repair. Sara will contact Bob and ask for a quote for services.

### ***Storage Bin***

John mentioned that we need to create a purchase order and then they can schedule a delivery for the storage bin. Sara will create.

### ***Transfer Station items***

Sara will meet with Richard and ask him, if he and Joe are able to meet on June 7, 2016 at 4:00pm. She will also ask him if Joe Koslow mentioned anything about the TV's and garbage bags located on the property across from the Transfer Station.

### ***559 North Groton Road***

Sara explained the information that she received from Laura Spector was in the review folder. Sara also drafted a letter based on the information that was provided.

Sara will reach back out to attorney; can we access the property before the date to check for items with value, what to do with the items of value not in relation to the building; should we do inventory of items and notice of items that we are not touching. The letter will be ready for next week's meeting.

We will need when cleaning up the property:

- Cleared container
- A selectmen on site to be able answer to what was done
- Track all hours and staff involved
- Track any other costs such as gas used, etc.

### ***10 Brock Lane***

Last we knew 10 Brock Lane was being cleaned up and it was put up for sale. No one has had the chance to drive by yet. The Select Board will drive by before next week's meeting so the progress can be discussed.

### ***593 North Groton Road***

Sara explained that she drafted a letter for 593 North Groton Road based on the conversation from last week. The Select Board was thinking about holding off for now due to DCYF being involved but Sara drafted one just in case. This will be ready for next week.

### ***893 Route 118***

Last we talked to the owners they were supposed to have it cleaned up in February. No one has had the chance to drive by yet. The Select Board will drive by before next week's meeting so the progress can be discussed. Sara will reach out to the owners by email to see how the clean-up is going.

### ***Memo From Sara***

Sara turned in a memo to show the rest of the time off she will need for Rachel's chemo. Sara had emailed this to the Select Board so they could review it before the meeting. **Christina motioned to approve the time off request dated 5/6/16 for Sara, Bob 2<sup>nd</sup>, so voted.**

### ***Every other week meetings***

Sara will come in at 7am every day to make up for the hours that will be lost from not having meetings those weeks.

There are no meetings on the following days:

May 31  
June 14  
June 28  
July 12

July 26  
Aug 9  
August 23

A Select Board will have to come in to sign checks on those weeks we are not meeting and it was agreed only one would come in with Darlene so we would have two signatures. John will take June, Bob will take July and Christina will take August. Also, we will have to Move the Department Head meeting in July.

After August we will re-evaluate and see how it is going and if we can continue to meet every other week.

### ***Evaluation Policy***

The Select Board needed to finalize the evaluation policy that John created for the Department Head Meeting 5/17/16.

Changes to be made:

- Increase reverse %
- Change anywhere it states 5 to 1
- Add signature line to the bottom

This will be ready for the next meeting. Sara will make these changes. Sara will reach out to Primex and see if they offer a training on writing an evaluation. Also, we will ask EJ if he has a separate evaluation for the Police Department. Sara had created an updated evaluation months ago so she will review it, make any changes and bring that to the next meeting.

### ***Glen- OT, vacation***

Sara explained that the Select Board never discussed how we are going to work Glen' overtime, vacation, etc. We need to decide this so we can let him know. We will meet with Glen next week at 5:30 pm to go over all of this.

### ***Meeting with Fire Chief on Cisterns & Dry Hydrants***

Sara explained this meeting was cancelled so the Select Board should decide when they would like to reschedule. This was rescheduled for June 7, 2016 at 5:00pm

### ***Parking at Everett Hobart Memorial Park***

Glen wanted to put out a no idling sign at the park. Christina thinks that we should put a sign that states for parking for Hobart Park only or something similar.

**Having no other business to conduct, Christina motioned to adjourn at 6:59pm, Bob 2<sup>nd</sup>, so voted.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith  
Administrative Assistant