

TOWN OF GROTON
WORK SESSION
August 30, 2016

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

Christina called the meeting to order at 4:30pm, Bob 2nd, so voted.

Assessment Updates with Mark Stetson

Mark Stetson from Avitar attended the meeting to provide the Select Board with updates regarding the property assessments. He presented the manual in paper form and the electronic version. He explained this is the Bible that explains the entire process and includes the sales that were used, etc. The entire Town changed due to the market value changing. This has to be done every 5 years. Mark said they provide a copy of the manual to the DRA as well.

The highlights from this revaluation were that the total evaluation didn't change a lot; it decreased by a little less than ½%. Some of the older homes didn't hold their value but some newer homes values went up. The land values also went up a little bit. He thinks that some of it has to do with that the tax rate is favorable and Groton is a good place to own property.

Mark mentioned that they sent out letters to everyone to give them a chance to call or meet with Avitar meet. There were 18 property owners that reached out and they met with them, had a phone conversation or talked through email. He stated that Bill Jolly was one that stood out. It started rough but after he got out there and actually see what Bill had at his property, because it was previously posted, then it could be accurately assessed. This made both Bill and Mark happy and Bill stated that he had a good experience with the assessor.

Mark said he felt it went very smoothly. This is his second re-valuation with Groton so he has really been getting to know the town.

He also mentioned that because of the pole license agreements being updated, the right of way is being assessed. There is some value there.

The live data came back today so Sara can now do the MS-1. Sara will need the land use and the forest amounts from MS-4. Mark provided that there is 17.837 acres coming out of current use and Sara will need this information for the MS-1 as well.

There is one more land use change recommendation coming to the Town from Avitar for a camper on North Groton Road, this is off of Fletcher Road.

Mark also stated that the Towns contract with Avitar is up at the end of this year so we will receive a proposal for another 5 year contract. This will be sent out within the next month. He stated they try to take a year off from visiting properties but then they do a 1/3, 1/3 and a 1/3 over the next three years.

The contract will start January 2017 and building permits, etc will be reviewed Spring of 2017 but the data verification wouldn't be done until 2018.

Bob asked what they do with a sign that says we shoot first. Mark said if it says no trespassing or keep it then they try to go to the door. Some owners will give blanket approval even if posted. But for these ones they will go to door and if no one is home they leave. If someone is home then they get permission before they do anything. If no permission then they try to do the assessment from the road.

There were no further questions so Mark left.

Set up next few work sessions

September 6

5:00pm: discuss items on list

5:30pm: discuss Transfer Station Supervisor Job

6:00pm: review evaluation

6:30pm: EJ's evaluation

September 13

2:00pm: meeting with EJ

3:00pm: meeting with Glen

*Sara will contact Cassandra Rudolph about setting up a meeting to answer any questions regarding the Groton Wind project for the Grafton project.

Solar Panel Project

This is a lot of information to be able to get this presented by September 1st. This will cost the Town a lot of money. Article 9 is 2nd article down. It also says the electric company has the right to change the rates at any time. Bob said that they had the building incorrect which was a concern.

Slim understands that we should hold off. Sara will email back and let them know that after further review we have decided to hold off on this project. Once the building is done we will revisit if we want solar or what the best would be for the Town.

Coutu concern

It was agreed that we need to schedule an appointment with Mr. Coutu, the Junkyard dog and the Select Board. Sara will try to contact them and set this up for the 27th at 4pm. Sara will see if we have a number for Mr. Coutu if not see if Ken Knowlton does.

Ethier excavating

Mary Pinkham was investigating concerns about Ethier. She wasn't concerned with his entrance but with another entrance that she feels is digging a pond. DRA has a mosaic that was just updated and she is using google earth. She is looking into her concerns. Sara sent her everything on the property so she can research it. She will let us know if she finds any concerns.

Bond North Groton Road Project

There have been a few more residents that have suggested we look into a bond to finish the North Groton Road Project all at once. We have to look into this and costs for this. We would have to get an estimate of what this would cost and what it would cost to just do a bigger section of road next year. We

will look at three different options. Sara would ask Dana White and ME Latulippe for a quote to finish entire road. We will also need to look at a bond bank. Sara will do some research on this.

Email about wind project

Sara wanted to know what we should do about getting back to this person. Miles said he is a little uncomfortable to do this as a single person but wouldn't mind if it was a meeting all together. Sara will reach out and see if she can meet on election day 9/13.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 7:02pm, Bob 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant