

TOWN OF GROTON
WORK SESSION
September 13, 2016

In Attendance: Christina Goodwin, John Rescigno, Kyle Andrews and Sara Smith (Administrative Assistant)

Christina called the meeting to order at 1:00pm, John 2nd, so voted.

Iberdrola/Avangrid donation

Pam Hamel asked for the Board to consider a donation of back-up/surge protectors from Avangrid. She has already talked to Dave Switaj who explained that the Town could use them, that they are high end but there are concerns:

- The back-ups need a new 30 amp 120 volt dedicated circuit, which would mean that an electrician would need to come out since there is no free space in the electrical panel. This would be an added cost to the Town.
- The fans that run the back-ups are as loud as a running refrigerator so this would be noisy.
- Replacement batteries are expensive at \$200+ for the battery pack.

The Select Board decided not to go with these since it appears it would be more of an added cost to the Town. Sara will contact Pam Hamel and Dave Switaj to let them know.

Health Concerns

Brock Lane

The Select Board sent them a letter and asked that they contact us with their plan but we never heard from them. However, Richard said that Jason Fields brings at least one truck load to the Transfer Station every week. EJ also confirmed that the property looks much better. The Select Board decided to drive by before the next meeting, which is September 27, 2016.

893 Route 118

The Habitat for Humanity did a cleanup of this property. Sara will send a thank you for coming into compliance letter and will sign it on behalf of Select Board.

593 North Groton Road

Sara had pulled the information on 593 North Groton Road. The Select Board had visited the property in the past and didn't feel there was any violation that they could bring forward at that time. The property still has a lot of debris. The Select Board will ask Kyle to drive by and we will have a letter ready for next meeting.

Sara will create a spreadsheet similar to the one we use for junkyard to track health issues.

Concern on Blanchette Lane

There were two concerns about Blanchette Lane and the traffic from Circle Camp. EJ said there is no way that there is as much traffic as they were stating there was going in and out of Blanchette Lane at all hours of the night and day. Also, based on the information we have they are allowed the camp is allowed to use the road.

Sara will send a letter stating that the Road Agent does maintenance in the Fall and will be doing this again, that the traffic is not causing the damage to the road as it is mostly the weather and time, and will mention if the traffic becomes a safety issue to contact the Police Department. Sara will also apologize for the delay. This will be sent from Sara on behalf of Select Board.

Meeting with EJ on other topics

Full Time Position

EJ provided handouts to help support his recommendation for the Select Board to consider a full time Police Officer position. He provided the calls for service for 2015 overall, which were 639 calls. These include vacant house checks, pistol permits, etc. John asked if this takes into consideration the calls the State Troopers cover. EJ said it does. He did say that Town handled 91% of the calls and the State handled 9%.

For 2016 so far there have been 378 calls. The Town handled 84% and the State handled 16%. If we have a full time officer, we would see the State handling less calls which means faster response time. EJ mentioned Iberdrola called dispatch about a truck pulling in and parking in front of the security gate. The State Police responded and it took them well over an hour to respond. However, if it was more serious call he thinks the State Police would call out Plymouth.

EJ tried to pawn off a call due to it could have possibly become physical and he tried to get a Trooper to cover and they were unable to.

EJ stated that he also feels that the people will get to know Jonathan. He is doing very well. A resident sent a card with compliment on Jonathan. Christina asked for a copy of this for the next Select Board meeting and to put on his file. EJ said when someone you know shows up at a stressful time you feel better so it would be better to have our officers here full time and responding full time. Also, by seeing the cruiser out more often it will reduce crime.

Salary for Full Time

When EJ submitted the grant, it was for 3 years and it is a 75/25 grant. He ran the amounts at \$19.50/hr for 40 hours which totals \$40,560.00; retirement for the year would be \$10,700.00; insurance would be about \$10,000.00 a year for the Town. Christina stated that he will need to do some more work on the pay taking the wage study into consideration. Christina also feels that we should put it as a warrant article.

Christina thanked EJ for all his work on this. It definitely shows the need for a full time Police Officer.

John states that he agrees that a full time officer would be better. They will be more reliable, less likely to leave.

EJ said working on budget part time vs full time it would be a 7% increase just looking at pay.

Academy Forms

EJ said the form we sent stated that Johnathan was a part time officer, which creates a concern for entering the full time academy. Christina asked what form is needed now. EJ said that it is FORM I that states a background check was done. EJ will get this form filled out to be signed.

EJ asked is there any way to put that he is full time on a new form. The Select Board doesn't like putting this down that he is full time when he is not. Would it be possible to send a letter with the FORM I stating he is currently part time but will be submitting to Town to have a full time officer at Town Meeting? Christina is thinking that we should get the support for full time but we have to plan that we may not. She said that we could put part time but working 32 hours. Christina states that EJ should have the conversation that our goal is for him to be full time.

The norm is that the Police Chief signs the form but he had the Select Board Chair sign it. The Select Board is okay with EJ signing these moving forward if that is the norm.

EJ will look into the hours the academy considers part time or full time.

Sculptured Rocks Road

EJ stated that Sculptured Rocks got busy so people would drive up and down the road and wait for a parking spot and often parked on the side of the roads. There was nothing posted. There was a resident complaint about the parking so EJ checked it out. There was parking on one side of the road only.

Then another resident suggested parking for residents only on the sections near houses or near the private pool area further up from Sculptured Rocks. This cannot be done when it is on the road.

EJ said he is going to meet with the director of Parks and ask to have the parking lot expanded. He also mentioned they could charge fees for parking through NH Parks. He is also going to suggest them putting up a sign that states regulations and possibly a cross walk. EJ will ask the director to come meet with him and the Select Board to discuss our concerns. Another suggestion would be to put up a porta potty since the Towns porta potty is getting over used in the summer.

A little further up there is a place called Vikki's pool and the landowner allows people to use it but he wants it to be residents only. The Town can't put this up or enforce it but he can pay for his own sign that states Groton Residents only.

Primex Training for Police Chief Development

EJ will be taking part in a Police Chief Development Program through Primex. It will take place in October, November and December, which will help him with his role as Chief of Police.

Animal Control

EJ did some research and he found the following:

- Hebron is covered by the Police Department.
- Wentworth shares services with Piermont and Piermont is really too far for Groton.
- Dorchester has Cookie and she could be a possibility. Kyle has dealt with her before so he could provide feedback.
- Alexandria has Donna Duquette but it could be a time issue due to wherever she lives.

EJ wanted to know if we should advertise this to see if there are any interested parties in the Town. John asked if it should just be the Police Department like Hebron.

The Select Board will revisit the Animal Control Officer position at the next Select Board meeting on the 27th.

Response time

EJ planted a seed to see if he can't get Jonathan a little closer so the response time wouldn't be as long. A 30-45 minute time is reasonable and right now he is about an hour away.

Meeting with Glen

Project List

- North Groton Road ditching is done
- North Groton Road project is done
- Province Road ditching project is next and will be done in September; Kyle asked if any ditching needs to be done on Edgar Albert Road. Glen mentioned that there is some road repair but not ditching.
- Culvert at Bea Jaynes driveway needs to be fixed; Glen said we created a failed culvert by the ditching that was done to keep water flowing so he was wondering if we should be taking care of the replacement/repair. Kyle asked if the same culvert can be used. Glen thinks it can be and then we can cover the labor. Glen has a spare culvert that can be used if this one cannot. The Select Board is okay with this.
- Issue near Helen Santoros- this berm is being paved tomorrow
- Sculptured Rocks Road culverts are being done by Friday afternoon. Kyle asked why the original date was July but now it is delayed. It was explained that we were waiting for

the milling machine and this was to be done at the same time as the North Groton Road project.

- Asphalt pile- this is going to Province Road next week.
- River Road embankment is still to be determined. On the corner of the road the embankment is starting to erode.
- Atwell/Orange Brook Bridge- this was removed from Glens list
- Brush cutting is done
- Gravel Road maintenance- this is done; all roads are complete
- Crack fillings- there are some small areas to do. Glen said he had to wait for cooler weather. This was moved to October.
- Fletcher Road- TBD; Glen said he doesn't think we will have the money left. There was grading and ditch lines done but as far as the issue with the road being excavated out it may have to wait until next year.
- Blanchette Lane- this was done once and will have to get raked again which will be done in October since it just got washed out again. Glen mentioned they put a lot of material on the road in the last few years.

It was stressed that the jobs that are listed for September need to be done by the end of September. We won't put exact dates on them but they need to be completed by the end of the month.

Organization

Christina thinks that we should come up with more organizational opportunities. We did the vehicle maintenance cards. We also have the dry erase board. John mentioned that he is going to take the board and put calendar outlines on it and that Glen will be responsible for putting the dates in and any meetings, deadlines, etc on it.

Christina recommended that Glen consider buying metal shelving so he doesn't have to have paperwork and such on the floor in his office. Glen said he has some shelves at the Highway Department that he can clear off and use. He also has a cabinet upstairs that can be cleaned out to be used.

Christina also stated that anything hazardous can be brought to hazardous waste in Plymouth on September 24th.

Winter Plowing

Sara explained that Jeremy Haney said he is interested in plowing for the Town. Christina said we will keep this in mind.

Glen said he will follow up with Jeremy and also will check with Roger Thompson, Sr. to see if he will be able to assist.

Pavilion

Christina explained the paving came out great. The wood around needs to be removed and some gravel or sand needs to be put up to the paving edge to give gradual change from paving to grass. Glen doesn't know if that will work but he will think of something.

Fill in

Christina filled Kyle in on the topics that were discussed before he arrived. Sara will get Kyle the information from the wage study.

Signature Cards

Darlene presented the signature cards to add Kyle and remove Bob. **Kyle motioned to sign the updated signature cards, John 2nd, so voted.**

Grafton VT Windham Wind conference call

Brian Case from the Town of Grafton VT, Kyle, John, Christina, Miles and Sara

Brian asked the Board and Miles questions about Groton Wind.

What had been planned? Expectations by Iberdrola met? Anything else to share?

When first started was there any cost to the Town for the initial negotiations of the project?

Miles would prefer to have the Select Board answer questions and he can add if needed as he is not on the Select Board he doesn't speak for the Town. Kyle mentioned that they offered the Town \$10,000.00 to cover any research and legal fees to move forward with the process.

Miles added there was an open house here to give the people an idea of what the project would look like if completed. It was at this open house that Miles asked how the Town was expected to proceed and that is when the money was offered to do the research. That money was more than what the Town needed. There was about 2000 remaining and we asked what they wanted us to do with the funds and they let us keep it.

Miles- have you been approached by Iberdrola about a potential wind farm? Yes they approached the Town through private owned timberland which is up in Windham with 20 towers on the ridge line in Windham and 8 towers in Grafton. Ridge is 1700 ft high. There are several other committees working on other impacts such as health and environmental.

Any conversation of what it meant to take the money? There were no strings attached.

Did your town struggle to take the money? No there was not. Brian explained that there is a divide there. Miles mentioned that there was more of a divide after the project was almost complete.

John explained that our contract might be different so don't solely go by what we say.

Other municipalities have stated it has cost them more.

He said he saw that the revenue is almost covering the Towns budget. It was explained that it covers about half.

Brian asked if there are any issues with the contract? Have they done what they said?

Kyle stated no issues and they have done what they said. Christina added that they have done more as well. They donate a lot for community support such as police vests, fire equipment, Old Home Day, etc.

Brian mentioned that he read that there were local contractors used for the job and also asked how many jobs were created from this? Christina mentioned that there were local contractors and construction companies, but there are only 7 jobs there now. We do know of one that is local but not sure of the rest. Miles added that Ed Cherrien worked with the Town and at the time they were not happy with the General Contractor which was from Maine but they said they were not going to be doing work with them again. Also, Miles added a local logger did the work and local gravel pits for materials.

Miles mentioned he doesn't know laws in VT but the agreement we signed and other windfarms can provide you the agreements that were signed. Miles said if this project moves forward he would urge them to get a copy from other towns.

Brian mentioned that they have not hired any legal or experts yet. He asked if this is what we used our money for. Miles mentioned we have our own attorney but we also used Gary Roberge, Assessor from Avitar, to try to increase the money the PILOT that was negotiated.

Brian mentioned that they are overwhelmed.

Miles asked if they considered holding a Town vote to see where the majority lies. Brian said it is tough because they are a town whose majority is seasonal; only 600 residents a year and 2nd home owners pay most of taxes so it is tough to say who should have a say. They are thinking it will probably be only residents, which are divided 50/50.

Miles mentioned that Windham/Alexandria wind project, NH Windwatch played into that and caused Iberdrola to pull out. We didn't have a vote here because most were for it. However, the Town of Dorchester asked if could do it over what would you do differently and our response was to hold a Town vote to see if the Town is in favor of it.

He said the biggest issue is because it is on top of the water shed. Also the size is too large.

Miles mentioned ours is 24 turbines and the size is the same at 498 feet. Brian mentioned they are at 520 feet and he thought ours were smaller.

Miles asked if they offered to give any residents tours of existing wind farms? Miles mentioned this is the attitude this day and age.

Brian asked how it got approved? Miles stated that NH Energy projects of certain size have to go thru the Site Evaluation Committee (SEC); there is a long process of information sharing and request for more information; almost like a trial because there are witnesses that give statements; people can file to be intervenors; all arguments are made and at the end of the day there is info for the SEC to review and determine if they will issue a certificate to allow it to be built. In our case they approved but put other factors that need to be in place.

Brian asked if this required a bond? No. Miles mentioned that after the project was complete, the Town did have a Petitioned warrant article pass that would require if another wind farm came along that it would require a bond.

Miles mentioned to do their homework, research all aspects of everything that may surface, get as much information from the public domain as you can. He said this is great advice

They are being told they need to vote on it by November 11th.

Brian thanked everyone for the time and comments. It is encouraging to hear things went the way it should and it worked out well. Is it ok to reach back out for follow up question? Yes.

Pump Stations

It was decided previously that pump stations were a better idea for the town instead of dry hydrants or cisterns. Roger was supposed to look into this and get some more information. We need to look at this again. Sara will contact Roger to see if he has any more information so we can prepare for the March Town meeting.

Hansen- Junkyard concern

John wanted to see if Glen's property has been taken care of. Glen's property was inspected in June. Sara had pulled the inspection for the meeting. He was not in violation at the time of the inspection.

Coutu

Originally we were going to meet with the Junkyard Dog and the land owner on September 27, 2016 at 4:00pm. Sara sent a letter to the resident asking them to let the Town know if this date and time works. We still have not heard back from him. Also, the junkyard dog is on vacation and cannot make that date.

It was agreed to keep the meeting unless the property owner calls and says he cannot do it.

Junkyard Dog Concerns

Christina mentioned that she has concerns with the Junkyard Dog. He doesn't hold all properties to the same expectations and he should. For the Coutu property he felt that since no one can see it that it wasn't a big deal. This should matter. All properties should be held to the same expectations.

John asked if there are any other junkyard dogs at MRI. It was explained he is the only one and we looked into it before and he is the only one in the area. If you do not use him you would have to hire someone for just this or it would fall on the Select Board.

The Select Board would like to meet with the Junkyard Dog. Sara will see when in October he will be free to meet with them.

October Meetings

It was agreed to keep every other week for the Select Board Meetings but meet every week for Work Sessions for budget. The Work Sessions will be from 5:00pm-7:00pm every Tuesday.

Here are the upcoming Select Board Meetings:

September 27, 2016

October 11, 2016

October 25, 2016

November 15, 2016

November 29, 2016

*there are elections on November 8, 2016 that is why there is no meeting that day.

Sara will move the department head meeting to October 11th at 4:00pm since we are booked for the 27th.

John and Kyle are okay with Sara and Christina setting up the budget meetings.

Road Committee

Christina asked Sara to post that the Road Committee will be meeting at 6:00pm on Wednesday September 21st. Sara will post this tomorrow.

Bond for NGR

Sara has done a little research on this. Sara has asked ME Latulippe and DA White for an estimated quote on completing the road project. This was the first step to see how much it would cost and then to get bond information from there.

Sara also contacted the lady that Miles was working with for the bond for KHPAC. She will be calling Sara Wednesday or Thursday to discuss options.

Having no other business to conduct, Kyle motioned to adjourn at 6:50pm, John 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant