

Town of Groton
Select Board Work Session Minutes
December 17, 2019

In attendance: John Rescigno, Tony Albert and Sara Smith (Administrative Assistant - AA)

Absent: Ron Madan

John called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Sand Policy

It has always been known at the Highway Department that each residence is allowed to take three 5-gallon buckets (15 shovels full) of sand to be used at their residence in Groton only and that the use of Town sand for commercial sanding of driveways, for use in mechanical sanders, or for residence outside of the Town of Groton is not allowed. There are some old policies on this but the Select Board wanted to update the policy with current signatures. It was agreed to do the approval of this at the Select Board Meeting.

Town Clerk Office Hour Changes

Ruth sent the Select Board an email which stated that as of January 1st, 2020 she would like the Town Clerk Office hours to be Monday 9am to 4pm, Tuesday 12pm to 7pm, Wednesday 9am to 4pm, and Thursday 9am to 4pm. The Clerk's Office will be closed Friday, Saturday and Sunday. If the Select Board is okay with this, she would like them to announce it at the Select Board meeting, she will post it and Sara can put it online. The Select Board is good with the hours so they will mention

Vacation time

Due to the busy year with FEMA, grants, etc., Sara and Bubba both have vacation time that they will have to carry over. Sara took the last week of in attempts to use some of her vacation time. However, she has comp time and sick/personal time that she will have to use or she will lose so she will use these first and then some vacation time. She will be using 18 hours of vacation but will have to carry the rest over but is planning on taking the last week in April off for the schools April vacation so she will be able to use a week then. She will also plan on taking a few days here and there after Town Meeting in March to use the time up. Bubba also has a vacation planned for April 2nd-14th so he will use up his carried over time then. **John motioned to approve Sara and Bubba to carry over their vacation time to be used by the end of April, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Public Hearing for USDA Grant

Sara explained that in the paperwork for the USDA grant, it is stated that all applicants must hold at least one public information meeting. The public meeting must be held after the preapplication is filed and not later than loan/grant approval. The meeting must give the citizenry an opportunity to become acquainted with the proposed project and to comment on such items as economic and environmental impacts, service area, alternatives to the project or any other issue identified by Rural Development. The applicant will be required at least 10 days prior to the meeting, to publish a notice of the meeting in a newspaper of general circulation in the service area, to post a public notice at the applicant's principal office, and to notify Rural Development. The applicant will provide Rural Development a copy of the published notice and minutes of the public meeting. If a municipal applicant is bonding for a portion of the project, the public meeting associated with obtaining bond approval will meet this requirement.

Sara created a posting which states the following: The Select Board has scheduled a public hearing for Tuesday, January 7, 2020 at 7:00pm at the Town House at 754 North Groton Road. The purpose of the public hearing is to inform the residents that the Town of Groton applied for a USDA grant to assist with the purchase of a new

truck with front plow, side wing plow and sander for the Groton Highway Department. This meeting will allow the residents to comment and ask questions regarding this grant and the truck.

The Select Board approved the posting. Sara will send it to the newspaper to put in the 12/26/19 edition of the paper which will be 12 days prior to the public hearing. This will also be put online and posted at the Town House and Transfer Station.

104 Sculptured Rocks Road

Sara explained that she spoke to Dave Degler from the Department of Environmental Services (DES) who went out to 104 Sculptured Rocks Road last week and met with Crystal Baker. She inherited the property from her parents, who both passed away. He stated that he didn't see anywhere that looked like they were burying anything but he did see an old barn that had caved into the foundation and a brush/burn pile that had couches, mattresses, and other furniture on it. He told her those items needed to be pulled out and disposed of properly. There also were items he noticed that were being tossed out the window. He told her that she needed to clean up the areas of concern in the back yard such as the old barn, the burn pile and there were tires, a camper, and other items. She told him that she would be cleaning it up in the spring time with help from her brothers. Dave asked Sara if the Town has sent letters regarding the debris on the property. Sara explained that after the June inspection a letter was sent as they were in violation. Another inspection was done in August where they had cleaned up and were not longer in violation. Since then the Town was made aware of the concerns which is why Sara emailed DES and asked them to look into it. In addition, Sara contacted Ken Knowlton, the junkyard dog from MRI, who is doing a junkyard inspection this week and will be sending the Town the report. He asked that Sara send him this report when we receive it. Sara explained to Dave that this property has been in and out of compliance since at least 2012.

While Sara had him on the phone, she asked if the inspection from DES took place at 1214 North Groton Road as well since this was supposed to happen at the same time but she hasn't heard anything. He said he believes it did but hasn't seen a report but will look into it. Sara explained this has been an on going issue for many years as well. The Town is in the process of going to court over the condition of this property but wanted DES involved for the environmental concerns attached to this property. He will look into this and also asked if Sara gets this report first to send it to him.

Annual Town Report

The Select Board discussed the following:

- Sara reached out to five different companies for quotes on the Town Report. Bridge and Byron Printers is the company we used last year and they came in at the lowest quote again and they did a great job last year. The Select Board agreed to use them again.
- We need to take the picture for the cover. John would like to put the new truck and the new cruiser on the new bridge for the picture so once we get the new cruiser, we will take the picture.
- We need to think about who we should dedicate the Town report to. It was agreed to not do a dedication this year and the Select Board decided that going forward the Town report will only be dedicated for special circumstances instead of doing a dedication every year. **John motioned to only dedicate the Town report going forward for special circumstances and not to do it every year, Tony 2nd, so voted.**
- John did the Select Board write up. Sara put the copies in their folders for them all to review and let her know if they need to add anything. Sara will change the part about the dry hydrant to say that it was the second dry hydrant in Town.
- Sara has been working on the town report and putting it in order and working on all the sections she is responsible for. She has also been reviewing the reports as they are submitted and making sure they are the right font and set up for the right page size.

Budget Meetings

The Select Board discussed the following:

- Sara received an updated quote on for tearing down the old library. The quote we had was for \$9,500.00. The new one is for \$10,400.00. Sara will put this in with the warrant articles to be reviewed at that time.
- Sara asked John if he was able to go get the carpet samples. He has not yet. She did receive the quote back from Home Depot and they are quoting \$5,462.60. We would have to move all furniture. It was agreed at a previous meeting that this wouldn't be a warrant article and would come out of the Town House Capital Reserve Fund. John will pick up the carpet samples and we will go from there.
- Warrant articles are due January 2, 2020 so we will go over these at the next work session.
- Regarding the Transfer Station budget, we will need to see if we should increase this line. Sara will contact Casella to see if our tonnage has gone up and to see if this is comparable to other towns our size.

Other items

- Sara will follow up on moving the Emergency radio.
- Sara will also follow up with the Alarm Company on when doing alarm at the Highway Garage.

Meeting with Chief Bagan

Chief Bagan met with the Select Board to go over the following:

- Prosecutor: Chief was reviewing this and is not sure if there is a previous agreement. Sara gave him the free legal contact to email and he got some information regarding this. He also found some bylaws. A copy of the association bylaws state, any member may withdraw from the association upon 90 days advance written notice but such withdrawal shall only be effective after December thirty first of the calendar year that the notice was given. It also states notwithstanding the foregoing, any member may withdraw from participating in the assoc. at any time. However, any member so withdrawing as required above shall, nonetheless, remain financially liable for the duration of the fiscal year that is current 90 days from the date of notice. John recommended that Michael reach out the them and ask for the most current agreement that has been on file so this can be reviewed. Then we can send this to the attorney if needed to see if there is anyway to get out of this since we just hired a new Chief and haven't had one for over a year. The Chief has found other options for cheaper prosecution through other Police Departments or even the Sheriff's Department.
- Cruiser: The total will be around \$43,785.00 with everything. They submitted the graphics which the Select Board thinks looks good. Michael will get Sara the invoice so she can request the money be moved from the Capital Reservice Fund. If it is done before the next meeting the Select Board will come in to sign the request. **John motioned to come in to sign the request to transfer the money from the Capital Reserve Fund when it is ready, Tony 2nd, so voted.** The cruiser will be available before the radio will be ready so he may have to use a portable radio for now until the radio is ready.
- Transfer Station: The Select Board explained that they think it would be a good idea for the Police Chief to come in and introduce himself to the residents and check that they are residents. If there is a problem then we can order dump stickers if needed but Norm and Richard will have to make sure that they enforce this and are checking for it.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 6:55pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant