

TOWN OF GROTON
SELECT BOARD MEETING
November 5, 2019

In Attendance: John Rescigno, Tony Albert and Sara Smith (Administrative Assistant)

Absent: Ron Madan

Audience Members Present

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

MINUTE APPROVAL

John motioned to approve the Work Session Meeting minutes of October 15, 2019 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted.

John motioned to approve the Select Board Meeting minutes of October 15, 2019 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted.

John motioned to approve the Work Session Meeting minutes of October 22, 2019 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted.

NEW BUSINESS:

Swearing in- Police Chief

Michael Bagan has completed all of the hiring process, including the background check, PT test, all forms, and NH Police Standards and Training Council meetings. The Town has received the go ahead to hire him. **John motioned to swear in Michael Bagan as the part time Police Chief for the Town of Groton, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Ruth Millett, the Town Clerk/Tax collector, swore him in. The Board and the public welcomed and congratulated Michael on his new position with the Town. John explained that he will be effective today but his actual first day to work will be Wednesday November 13, 2019 to do paperwork with Sara and to get computers set up, getting acclimated, etc. Tony mentioned that one of the first things that he needs to do is pick out a cruiser.

Kyle asked Michael to tell them a little bit about himself. Michael explained that he worked in law enforcement in New York for 24 years, 7 with New York City and 17 with Nassau County. He retired for a few years and was living in upstate New York. He had an interest in New Hampshire for living and a lot of Police Departments were hiring so he applied for a couple and ended up working for Moultonborough for about 3 years. He decided he wanted to continue working in law enforcement but elsewhere so he applied to Groton. He has worked in all atmospheres and grew up in a small town so he is used to a small-town atmosphere.

Kyle asked if he is certified. Michael explained that he is full time certified and completed the NH police standards and training. Sara mentioned that he had to go before the Police Standards and trainings since it had been more than 30 days that he has worked as a Police Officer but was within the two years. He had to do a full background check, PT tests, other tests and NH Police Standards and trainings sent the Town a letter that all requirements had been met.

Kyle asked what is going with the cruiser. Tony mentioned that we did receive some money from the insurance company and we have some money in the Police Cruiser Capital Reserve fund so between these two there is enough money to buy a new cruiser but the Select Board wanted Michael to be the one to take this on.

Sherry asked what his hours will be like. John mentioned they had agreed on 25-29 hours a week depended on what was going on in Town. He will get acclimated first and then will work the shifts that are needed.

Tony mentioned that the Select Board went over the Police Budget tonight but they want him to look at it. They would also like to meet with him on other things. Sara will add him to the work session agenda for November 19, 2019 at 5:00pm.

The Select Board welcomed Michael aboard!

Bids for Engineering for Sculptured Rocks Road Culvert Project

The Town of Groton in the newspaper and online to solicit bids for the Sculptured Rocks Road culvert project. The bid submissions were due by Monday, November 4th at 4:00pm.

Sara explained she received a lot of calls on this but they were from the contractors to do the work so she explained these invitations to bid will be put out by the Engineer once we have one in place. As far as the engineer bids, the Town of Groton received one bid from KV Partners which went over the scope of services, information and services to be furnished by the Town and assumptions, the schedule, the fee and payment (which totaled \$39,800.00), the general conditions and the acceptance. **John motioned to sign the proposal from KV Partners and to have him start as soon as possible, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Supplemental Intent to cut- 19-193-06

The Town received a supplemental Intent to Cut for the original cut for Map 9 Lot 2. There are no taxes owed on the property so a bond was not required and all information on the intent is correct. **John motioned to sign the supplemental Intent to Cut for Map 9 Lot 2, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Intent to cut- Map 5 Lot 161

The Town received an Intent to Cut for Map 5 Lot 161 for a 35-acre cut. There are no taxes owed on the property so a bond was not required and all information on the intent is correct. **John motioned to sign the supplemental Intent to Cut for Map 5 Lot 161, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Report of cut- Map 3 Lot 5-2

This report of cut is for Map 3 Lot 5-2 on Brock Lane for a cut of about 20 acres. **John motioned to sign the yield certificate for Map 3 Lot 5-2, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Amended Septic Plan- Map 5 Lot 104

Colin Brown dropped off an amended Septic Plan and local approval for Map 5 Lot 104. The Select Board signed the local approval for the original at the last meeting but they changed it to a 2-bedroom septic. All the information is correct. **John motioned to sign the amended local approval for Map 5 Lot 104, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Pistol/revolver License

The Town received a renewal application for a pistol/revolver license. Sara sent the information to the State Police and they conducted a background check and emailed back that we are all set to issue this permit. **John motioned to sign the pistol/revolver license, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

2019 Equalization Municipal Assessment Data Certificate

The Department of Revenue Administration sent in the yearly equalization municipal assessment data certificate to be signed by the Select Board. The Equalization Ratio is where the assessments fall during the year and should reflect market value as close as possible to 100%. The State will review the information

submitted, which will be reviewed by the State Department of Revenue. The Certificate is what the Town needs to submit to release the information to the State. Avitar does the work for us, sends us the form and once we send it back, they release the information to the Department of Revenue. The preliminary analysis indicates a median sale to assessment ratio of 98.92% but since 8 sales wouldn't provide a large enough sample so they did an analysis of sales from 10/1/17 through 9/30/19 which indicates a median sale to assessment ratio of 95.42% which they anticipate the final DRA ratio to be similar, but we have not received those as of yet. **John motioned to sign the 2019 Equalization Municipal Assessment Data Certificate, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Letter from Avitar- Map 5 Lot 23-4

Avitar sent a letter to the Town explaining that they looked into a concern from the Town Clerk and the Administrative Assistant regarding the property located at Map 5 Lot 23-4. The concern was that the property has been washed away from the storms. Avitar conducted a field review and confirmed that some of the land that existed in that area has been washed away. However, based on a search of deeds it appears that this property was never in fact owned by the person listed and this land doesn't exist as stated, the land that exists is included with Map 5 Lot 45. Avitar recommends that Map 5 Lot 23-4 be deleted from the Town's assessing records beginning with the 2020 tax year. **John motioned to delete Map 5 Lot 23-4 from the Town's assessing records beginning with the 2020 tax year per Avitar's research and recommendation, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

MS-60W

This is a waiver request for the locally elected audit that allows towns, under population of 700, to request permission to complete sections 1 and 2 only for the audit. **John motioned to sign the MS-60W, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Building Permit Map 2 Lot 62

The owners submitted a building permit for Map 2 Lot 62 for a 12x15 utility shed. This will not be heated or cooled. **John motioned to sign the building permit for Map 2 Lot 62, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Building Permit Map 2 Lot 69-2

The owners submitted a building permit for Map 2 Lot 69-2 for a 24x16 shed for tractor and wood storage. This will not be heated or cooled. **John motioned to sign the building permit for Map 2 Lot 69-2, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Bank of NH- request for meeting to explain what they can offer

Megan Ryder from the Bank of NH emailed the Town to see if she could set up a meeting on Friday, November 18, 2019 to explain what they can offer the Town. The Town currently uses Meredith Village Savings bank. Sara will email to see if there is anything that the Bank of NH can email the Town about what they have to offer.

Municipal Aid Check

Sara explained that the Town received a check for \$10,279.17 and the description was October 2019 Municipal Aid. Ruth and Sara were not aware of what this was for so they reached out to the State to find out. The State explained this payment is for aid to cities and towns and is part of the state's biennial budget that was recently passed. We will receive another payment next Oct. 1st as well. This money, if received by Oct 15th (which it was), may be considered unanticipated revenue under RSA 31:95-b and may be expended pursuant to RSA 31:95-b, II-IV. Sara pulled up the RSA and it states "Chapter 346 indicates that municipal aid received by October 15, 2019 may be considered "unanticipated revenue," accepted and expended under the provisions of RSA 31:95-b, II-IV, whether or not a municipality has adopted that statute. For unanticipated money in the amount of \$10,000 or more, RSA 31:95-b requires the governing body to hold a public hearing on the action to be taken, with notice of the time, place and subject of the hearing published at least seven days before the

hearing is held. For unanticipated money less than \$10,000, the governing body must post notice of the funds in the agenda and include notice in the minutes of the public meeting at which the money is discussed.”

Sara emailed DRA and NHMA to see if the money has to be used for certain things and when it has to be used by. Michelle from DRA explained to Sara that it can be used as the RSA states and can be used as unanticipated funds. DRA mentioned we can use it towards the July 2019 storm damages but we need to post a public hearing on this. It was received by October 15, 2019 so the Select Board agreed to have the public hearing at the beginning of the next Select Board meeting on 11/19/19. Sara drafted a posting for the public hearing and the Select Board agreed this is good to post. Sara will post this in the newspaper and online.

Annual Thanksgiving Dinner

Alison Bagley is planning on holding the annual Thanksgiving dinner on Saturday, November 16, 2019 from 11:30am-1:00pm at the Town House. She is requesting use of the Town House this day and the day before for set up. Ruth will be here the day before but will anyone be around on Saturday to let her in from 9:00am to 2:00pm. John will let her in.

SELECT BOARD ITEMS:

Atwell Orange Brook

John explained that the Select Board, Sara and Bubba have been doing everything they can to get some assistance from the State for cleaning out the river. Bubba and Sara have made many attempts to call, email and send letters to the State and Army Corps of Engineers and they were unable to get people to respond or get any answers. John has contacted the governor and the State as well. Due to no answers, Sara contacted the Senators office who set up a meeting and on Tuesday, October 22, 2019 John, Tony, Sara and Bubba walked the Atwell Orange Brook with the Senator, someone from wetlands, two members from DES (one was an engineer), a representative from Army Corps of Engineers and someone from Fish and Game. We walked up the brook and showed all of the debris and damage. The Town asked what the state could do to clear it up and to help with this. The end result was that no one wanted to assist or said they couldn't assist. Fish and Game owns the land that the River runs through but he said more than once that they don't have the money and don't have any plans on doing anything at this time. The DES engineer said some of the debris is working as a dam and will help slow the water down. John mentioned he agrees that is happening now but his concern is what happens when it breaks and he is afraid it will cause more damage. DES did tell the Town they will give permitting for work but no funding. They also said that the Town can enter the water with a chainsaw but no equipment without permits but if equipment is used then permits will be needed.

Sherry said she thought the governor said he would assist the Town in any way he can. John has tried to get ahold of him and then finally did and the governor talked more about the FEMA money which we already knew we were getting from the 2017 storm but didn't offer help with any other projects.

The Select Board, Sara and Bubba all stressed that the Senator has supported us and has been great with the FEMA funds, with this, and so much more.

Kyle asked if we have received all of the money from 2017 storm. It was explained that we got an advance on the funds but this was not all of it. Once we submit final bills when they are received, we will get reimbursement.

Kyle asked if we have received money from 2019 storm. It was explained there has not been any money given yet. We just had the site visits and are waiting to hear back with the final damage totals from FEMA. We have a follow up meeting in a few weeks regarding this.

Kyle asked what we are going to do for money in the future because we have been hit with so many storms and we know it is going to happen again. John explained that the only thing we really can do is put more money into the Disaster Relief Capital Reserve Fund. Tony explained that Sara and Bubba have been working on mitigation grants for the culverts on SRR to avoid this from happening again along with other grants for other areas of Town. There has also been better ditching that has been done which should help out.

DEPARTMENT ITEMS:

Highway Department

Bubba went over the following items regarding the Highway Department:

- The dry hydrant is installed and it was pump tested and is working.
- Last Friday there was a lot of trees down which made for clean-up.
- The Highway Department will be ready for weather coming this Thursday-Friday. They have been prepping and the vehicles are ready.
- Work is being done on Province Road to fix the damage from the October 2017 storm. They had to push the contract back because of the July storm, which caused more damage on that road, and now we are getting into winter. They are hoping that they will be able to continue on for a few more weeks.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Road Committee

Bubba mentioned that the next Road Committee Meeting will be Tuesday November 12, 2019 at 6:00pm.

Building Committee

Bubba mentioned that the next Building Committee Meeting will be Thursday November 14, 2019 at 6:00pm.

Cemetery Committee

Slim mentioned that they had Bob Clay here to move the post over so they can attach the gate. They did this and they put the older rails up along with new ones. During the storm a tree came down but luckily it didn't do much damage. Richard Braley will clean up that tree up. There was another tree on the Rescigno property that came on to the cemetery. John will look at this.

The engraver come to River Road cemetery to put the name on the rock there. He will try to do it from this year's budget but it cannot be wet or too cold which may cause some issues due to the time of year.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:

Open positions

Ruth has a large list of open positions with people up for reelection. She will post this information.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 7:45pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant