

Town of Groton
Select Board Work Session Minutes
December 1, 2020

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

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

Budget Meetings

Since all first budget meetings have been completed, Sara put together the proposed budget and made changes from the last meeting. The overall changes are as follows:

- The budget increased by \$30,591 from last year and the major increases are adding Groton Roads, the increase in Health Insurance and the increase in transportation costs for the Transfer Station.
- It was agreed to move the Groton roads to the Highway Budget. If we are doing a warrant article this year for River Road, do we want to reduce the amount in this for this year. It was agreed to keep the \$25,000.00 in case things come up for the road project or other roads and the quote for River Road was not for replacing the culverts on the road so the Highway Department will need money for that.

Warrant Articles

Throughout the year, Sara puts together a list of items that come up in meetings or things that were put off from last year to look at for this year's warrant articles. Due to the list, she created and discussions in other meetings she put together a list of warrant articles and also confirmed articles that the Select Board would want to wait until next year to revisit.

The Departments have until December 31, 2020 to submit their warrant articles so we haven't received any yet. Below are the warrant articles that Sara put down to bring forward this year are:

- The Public Works Building/Bond: Sara sent the wording of this along with some questions for this to NHMA and is waiting to hear back from them with feedback.
- The operating budget: The total will change once the budget is agreed upon.
- Discontinuing the Fire & Equipment CRF and the Perambulation Fund.
- The Capital Reserve Warrant Articles: the only ones that were discussed to put money in this year is the Disaster Relief in case of another disaster, the Assessing Reval because we have to have this money once the reval is done every five years, and the Public Works which is the just the money that was in the Fire & Equipment and the Perambulation that are being discontinued.
- River Road: Bubba got a quote on this so Sara created a warrant article for this.
- The towns FEMA match for the work to still be completed from the July 2019 storm.
- The bridge to the Town Conservation Pond.
- The cemetery trustees submitted a warrant article for \$3,000.00 for the Jennie DeCoste Annex at River Road Cemetery.
- The library one that comes up every year, we can change this depending on what the library submits.
- Changing the voting hours for all elections to 11am-7pm.
- Selling/disposing of Town owned properties that were acquired by tax deeds. This actually will be two warrant articles as something similar was adopted in 1992, to sell these properties, but since then, more recently, there was an amendment where the "as justice may require" was added to allow the use of realtors, etc. so this needs to be voted on first and then we can add the properties. Sara provided the list of town property so the Select Board can review and see if there are any they want to sell. The Selectmen asked Sara to have Ruth provide the amounts owed on each property.

- The one we do every year which is for the Selectmen to transact any other business that may legally come before the Town.

Other items that Sara had on her list but she wanted to confirm with the Select Board that they wanted to wait until next year to revisit are:

- New excavator/trailer for Highway Department
- New backhoe/loader
- Basketball court at the park
- Cover for Transfer Station containers. The Select Board agreed that we should look into the cost of this first before we decide if we should put in a warrant article for it this year. The Select Board asked Sara to tell Norm to measure out how big the cover will have to be and get quotes for the covers for these. They believe it could be similar to what the salt/sand sheds are on the potential garage plans.

Next building meeting

At the last informational meeting on the building, it was discussed having one more meeting before Town Meeting in March, something a little closer so it is fresh and it was suggested to have it be advertised as a public hearing. Sara asked when they would want to do this. The Select Board agreed to do it February 2nd when we do the public hearing for the budget and the bond. Sara will check with the attorney to make sure the public hearings can be on the same night.

Other items that came up at the last meeting that we are looking into or need to discuss are:

- River Road- Bubba did get a quote on this.
- The Select Board making phone calls to residents. The Select Board agreed this should be done but thinks it should be done closer to the public hearing. Sara will work on getting phone numbers for this. John agreed we should have a script that is uniform to what everyone is saying.
- Putting together an explanation letter which states the reasoning behind the building like we discuss in the meetings. It was agreed that we should come up with something so the Select Board asked Sara to work on this letter. John said we should make sure we note that we cannot make changes to building then we would have to follow the flood insurance program.
- The Salt/Sand sheds being included or waiting until another year and using what we have for now. Are we keeping this in there or removing it? The Select Board agreed to keep these on there for now and then the Townspeople can decide at the Town meeting and we can make changes.
- Masks at Town Meeting or another location. Tony Tavares has reached out to the school to see if this is an option. Transportation will need to be provided if this happens.
- Groton Roads not having as much money put into it. This was moved to the Highway Budget and Sara had it highlighted to discuss the amount. The Select Board wants to keep this in the budget and at \$25,000.00.
- If the project comes in less than \$1 million will the grant be less. Sara will follow up on this question once she hears back from them on the other questions and obligation.
- Limiting the warrant articles as much as we can. The Select Board has been working on this.

401/405 Sculptured Rocks Road concern

A resident came in to see Sara and has some concerns about an illegal septic that was installed at 405 Sculptured Rocks Road over the summer. The resident said that the owners used a water tank, like is used for animals, etc., and buried it. They have also said that other renovations have been done at 401 Sculptured Rocks Road, same owner, so they are not sure if they will need an updated septic approval. The concern is how to we look into an illegal septic issue that has been buried? The Select Board asked Sara to reach out to DES to explain the issues and see what the Town can do and if DES needs to do anything on their end. Once we hear

back from DES says we can send a letter that we have been informed that a septic system has been installed and we haven't received DES septic approval.

Meeting with Pam and Ruth

Sara explained that she has a meeting with Pam and Ruth regarding the ACH charges and the best way to go about this to make sure that what Ruth gets charged is entered into QuickBooks so Sara's information will match Pam and Ruth. This meeting is scheduled for Wednesday December 2, 2020 at 4:00pm so Sara will have some extra time this week.

Email from Mike V- Fenoff retainage

Mike Vignale sent an email that Fenoff is looking for a retainage reduction from 10% to 2% as allowed by the Contract. Mike doesn't see a huge risk and he did get all of the lien waivers for work completed to be sure they don't owe anyone any money before the Town does this. This is discretionary and up to the Selectmen so he asked that they let him know what they would like to do. The work is complete. However, they bid the job knowing this retainage would be out there. Also, the retainage amount on the last payment application is only \$4,020.00 which is not 10%. Sara will reach out to Mike V to confirm the retainage amount before the Select Board make a decision.

Substantial Completion letter

Mike Vignale submitted a substantial completion letter for the work that was done by M.E. Latulippe on Sculptured Rocks Road. His letter said that he checked the work and it is satisfactory. The work that still needs to be completed is loaming and seeding, final paving, shoulder grading (following final paving), complete site stabilization (good stand of grass in seeded areas), and removal of all erosion control devices. Bubba confirmed that this is the work that is still to be completed.

Nedeau Lane

A resident has been doing work on Nedeau Lane and didn't submit a Class VI Road letter. The Select Board will go out and look at it and then will send him a letter that he shouldn't work on the road without submitting a Class VI road letter and include any concerns that are found during the visit.

State Road Maintenance Concerns

Bubba has had to salt/sand the State portion of North Groton Road. John thinks we should send a letter that they haven't been maintaining the road as they should be. Last year they did a great job but so far this year our Highway Department has had to take care of it. Tony said that Bubba should talk to Brian first and tell him we have concerns and see if we should contact the district office or if we should send a letter. John said that we need to have it on record that we are addressing it. They weren't out for the first few storms but have been out the last few storms. Bubba will talk to Brian and then let the Select Board know what was decided. **John motioned that if a letter is needed that the Select Board will come in and sign the letter, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Meeting with Bubba

Bubba met with the Select Board to discuss the following items:

- The sprayer is in. It is inside the garage.
- Nick from Rumney built the screen for the sander. He did a great job and it works well.
- Bubba would like to request that the Town change the procurement policy from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Tony said this will have to be a warrant article for the Town to vote on at Town meeting since the original one was. Tony thinks the current one is over 20 years old. Sara will work on getting some wording together for this and find out when the other warrant article on this was submitted.
- At a past meeting, Bubba had brought up that some incentive needs to be given to the Highway Department guys who do the plowing all hours of the day so that they don't leave to go somewhere else and get paid more. They are a great group and are dedicated and reliable. The Select Board

agreed that they cannot give raises until March when they do raises for everyone but they had agreed on a 3-hour minimum for call in. They had also asked Bubba to put together an on-call schedule and pay. Bubba talked to the guys about this to see if they would be willing to pick up on weekend a month for on call to give Bubba a little bit of a break since he is on call 24/7. They will each do one weekend a month on call for December, January, February, March and then a few months in the summer. Bubba will work out a schedule for this. Most towns and the State pay an hourly rate when on call. Bubba would like to offer \$50 a day to be on call, \$100 for the weekend. The Select Board agreed to this. Sara will put together a policy on this.

- Bubba mentioned that he got a quote for River Road which will be around \$103,000.00. That doesn't include the culverts. It was agreed that the culverts would come out of the Groton Paved Roads.
- Bubba thinks that if the garage doesn't go through, they should do a warrant article for the backhoe. It was agreed to wait a year on this and that if something else happens to the backhoe, there is money in the heavy equipment capital reserve.
- Bubba mentioned that we were about a half inch of rain away from being in another disaster the other night. Which brings up that we need to think about the procedure when there is a disaster. Tony suggested doing a radio check around Town. The mobile can reach almost all-around Town. It was also suggested to put another repeater somewhere else in Town. Another idea is that Bubba should reach out to Bill to come here and open the EOC and use the radio and man the phones. Then he can try to get the Police Chief, the Select Board and Bubba to meet at the Town House to move forward from there. The Select Board asked Sara will see if Patti and Bill can meet next meeting date 12/15/20 from 6-7 to go over ideas for this.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 6:53pm, Ron 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant