

TOWN OF GROTON  
SELECT BOARD MEETING  
September 15, 2020

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

**Audience Members Present**

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

**MINUTE APPROVAL**

**John motioned to approve the Work Session Meeting minutes of September 1, 2020 as written, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

**John motioned to approve the Select Board Meeting minutes of September 1, 2020 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

**PUBLIC HEARING- NEW PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY/HIGHWAY GARAGE & USDA GRANT:**

**John called the Public Hearing on the new public works facility/highway garage and the USDA grant to order at 7:01pm.**

The Select Board explained that 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 Public Works Facility/Highway Garage. The Town has been awarded the grant contingent to the Town voting in favor of the new building which will be voted on at Town Meeting in March 2021. This public hearing will allow the Select Board the time to explain the grant and the potential building and allow the residents to comment and ask questions regarding this grant and the new building.

Some key points that the Select Board went over were:

- USDA Grant is for \$250,000.00. This money has been awarded to the Town and is set aside for us and is just waiting for the Towns vote/approval.
- The Town worked with a different architect than last time and the cost estimate for the building with the salt and sand sheds is \$1,173,462.00. The Town would have to raise approximately \$900,000.00-\$950,000.00.
- The remainder would be bonded out if the Town votes in favor of this. The Town received bond quotes and the Select Board would like to go with the 10-year bond which 10-year bond with 2.00% interest: First year payment is \$128,250.00 and each year the payment would decrease with a final payment on the tenth year of \$96,900.00. Total interest paid would be \$118,750.00.

John explained that means the Town would be paying around \$100,000.00 a year for this over the next ten years for a ten-year bond. The Town has already been raising more than this each year for grants, road work, etc. Last year in grants we raised over \$300,000.00 for the Towns share to cover the grants and the year before was around \$200,000.00. This \$100,000.00 would be less than what we have been raising in the previous years. John opened it up for questions, comments, concerns.

It was asked if the \$250,000.00 comes off of the 1,173,462.00. The Select Board explained that it will which is why we would only need to bond around \$900,000.00 and not that full amount. Tony said the other reason we

would only bond around \$900,000, if not less, is there is about \$60,000.00 in the Public Works Capital Reserve Fund so the Town would apply money from this.

John and Tony explained they also looked at a 5-year bond and 15- and 20-year bonds but the 5 year the payments would be extremely high and there would be too much interest over the 15- and 20-year options. The 5-year bond would have an interest rate of 1.50% but would have a first-year payment \$220,875.00 and work its way down to \$192,850.00. For the 20-year bond with a 2.5% interest, the first-year payment is \$85,625.00 and each year the payment would decrease with a final payment on the twentieth year of \$46,125.00. Total interest paid would be \$255,000.00.

Bill Jolly confirmed the interest on the 10-year was \$118,750.00 so he pointed out that the Town would still be paying over 1 million. Tony mentioned the numbers we ran were on \$950,000.00 so the payments and interest will be less since we are applying money from the Capital Reserve Fund.

Peter Smith asked if the quote includes everything such as sitework, building, etc. Yes, that is for everything. John explained that this is just a quote from the architect which is a little higher but hasn't actually gone out to bid yet. When it goes out to bid it should be lower so that it doesn't catch the Town off guard. Tony said this is a quote for the steel building with the salt and sand sheds and the covers. John and Bubba explained the covers have 20-year warranties. Miles asked if there is there a warranty on salt and sand shed? Bubba said he will look into it. John said that the reason they went with the salt and sand sheds as shown on the display is that it was a huge cost savings to do it this way instead of building an actual structure for it.

Tony said the other thing we have to keep in mind is that we really need to do this. The current Town Garage has flooded at least six times so it is very important we build out of the flood zone. We don't know how much longer the insurance will cover it. The biggest thing is that we have this grant which is \$250,000.00 which is a one-time opportunity so we don't know if we have this opportunity again. Also, the longer we wait the more the prices will go up.

John mentioned that the building being where it is had made it hard to get other grants. The grant for Truck was almost turned down because they didn't want to give money towards a vehicle that would be stored in a flood zone. The only reason they gave us the grant was because we agreed to bring this building and grant before the Town for vote in March.

Bill asked how much the last building damage was. Sara explained for all of the damages due to the location, with the vehicle lost in the flood, equipment, materials, supplies, building damages, etc. it was between \$50,000.00-\$60,000.00. Bill said that if you take the \$60,000.00 and say we have five more floods that is at \$300,000.00 versus a million so if we don't do this what other options are there that have been explored. John mentioned that there really are not any other options. The Town has had building committee over a year, and all that has come up are other building options. It is currently in a flood zone so if we stay where we are, we continue to throw money away and there could be a point where the building can't be fixed or washes away and then need a new building at that point anyway but we won't have the grant or money put aside for this. Sara also said it is not just the money part of it but the fact that when the building is flooded and equipment is down or vehicles lost, that is lost time that the Highway Department doesn't have the building so is forced to work without it or without equipment while we wait for insurance to approve the losses and get new equipment.

Miles mentioned that it has actually been over about three years of building committees. Bubba said that is correct but everyone has ideas at Town Meeting but not all of these people show up to these building committee meetings.

Bubba said they wouldn't be coming to the Town if they didn't think this was our best opportunity with the grant. Tony added that they are also at a record low for the municipal bond rates.

Bill Jolly asked what the Town currently has for any outstanding debt or bonds? There are none. John said that not only is the Town in good shape that we don't have any outstanding bonds, over the last few years a lot of work has been done to the town with bridge replacement, paving, culvert replacements, etc. so the Town is becoming more structurally sound that we won't have to worry about any large scale projects coming up except for this one particular one. This really is the last one besides some work on River Road.

A resident asked if a smaller garage was considered because this is four bays? Are four bays really necessary? Yes, a smaller garage was considered but it would leave equipment outside and the cost savings wasn't large enough to leave a piece of equipment outside.

Miles asked what is each bay going to be used for? Could the equipment be doubled up in one bay? Bubba explained that we could if the building was wider but they width now would not allow it. We have the 6-wheeler, the backhoe, the one-ton dump that is the Dodge now but is being replaced next week and the pickup truck.

It was asked if the one ton and the pickup could go nose to nose in one of the bays? Bubba said not with plows on it. It is not wide enough. John said that by taking a bay off and making the building wider wouldn't save any money.

Miles asked what the measurement is on the building. Bubba explained it is 45x92. Bubba said they have laid out the vehicles in the past and it is not enough room. Bubba said he can get more information.

Peter Smith asked if we have explored the same size building but with a wood frame? Yes, we asked the architect about this and Bubba has the email from the architect which he read out loud which states the following: "We spoke with a structural engineer this morning and received some feedback on the cost of wood compared to steel. Typically, a pre-engineered wood building is the most cost-effective, it saves around 10% on the framing \$10-20k. Field built wood would save around 8% or \$8-16k. Under the heading for "Structural Steel - Pre-Engineered Building" on the opinion of cost, the framing will be less than \$180k of the total cost (this number includes roofing and siding), which is a small part of the overall project costs. The Advantages of wood is it is easier to sheath and insulate, wood is a bit stronger, however, 2x6 typically cannot span more than 16', so 2x8 construction would need to be used for this building. The advantages of steel are faster construction, non-combustible. Also, currently, the price of wood is going up and steel is going down. When the building goes to bidders, it could include alternatives to build as wood or steel, but for now we don't anticipate large savings changing the design to wood, as mentioned earlier, it would likely save in the \$10-20k range."

A resident said that it was previously mentioned that it would cost to have under cover, why would even just the pickup truck need to be under cover when most vehicles at our homes don't go in garages. Bubba explained that in the winter when they use pick up truck with the sander on it, the sand can freeze in the sander. Tony added that in the cold weather if you store it outside you will have to empty everything and things freeze. Bubba said they are covered now but they squeeze it in and it is very tight. They do it but it is tough to do. They can get everything in the garage but they have to move it around. It was asked that it can be done though. John said it can be done but door frames have been hit because of the angles they have to do.

Bill Jolly asked if there was an exploration to have the administration offices on a second deck which will make the building smaller, which will save on the foundation and the roofing. It was explained that it would actually increase price for the second floor because the second floor has to be structurally sound and follow ADA

guidelines which mean there would need to be an elevator, etc. Tony said that the other thing to keep in mind is that due to the site is set up, we have done test pits, etc. and there is a lot of ledge there. Bubba said knocking one bay off is around \$100,000.00 but we wouldn't save that full amount if we did a second floor or even if we had to make the building wider.

It was asked if the feasibility report and plans could be put online. Sara said she will put them on there under the building committee page for review.

Bill said he didn't know this meeting was taking place, his neighbor showed him the flyer. Bubba said it is an informational meeting and there will probably be two more before March Town Meeting. Tony mentioned that they don't want to surprise people at Town Meeting so they want to have a few meetings before then to make sure everyone has the information.

A resident said she thinks it is important that other residents know about these meetings. It was explained that Bubba did go over it with people at elections, the greeter was handing out the flyer, the plans were on the front table for people to review and people asked him a lot of questions.

John said comparing to what we raised in the last few years we could put this building up and still have about \$200,000.00 in wiggle room compared to grants in the past few years and road work that was done. We can't control the school taxes but we can control the Towns taxes and we aren't looking to raise more money than we have been. Tony said that out of our tax structure we average that 69% goes to the local school. We paid over a million to Newfound School District for payments last year, which we have no control over. That is the amount of this building over 10 years. Last year the Town only increased \$0.54 but the local school went up \$2.64 and the State tax went up as well. Bill said that is why this is scary because there are things out of our control. Tony said his point is that because of no large projects or other grants, we won't be asking the Town for more money than we have been. He said as Selectmen they can control what other items are put on the warrant to control it so that it doesn't get too high. John said we are not asking for \$100,000.00 each year on top of what we raised last year, we are looking at taking that money to incorporate in the budget so we know what we need each year to keep the budget down in order to get this building.

Ken Martell said imagine if you took the \$300,000.00 that was raised last year and give it back to the tax payers. John mentioned then we wouldn't have Sculptured Rocks Road having the work done that it is. Between the culverts and the road work on Sculptured Rocks Road that is where most of this money has gone. Tony said they will make sure the town portion is not increased because of this. John said that if you live in the Town you have an obligation to support the Town whether it is the roads, buildings, etc. Ken said the people have other obligations too. Ken said that we have done very well on the roads but the taxes are out of control. John said the bulk of the taxes is the school and no one goes to the school meetings and they need to. Tony said it is a million dollars but it is a 10-year plan. Ken said \$100,000.00 a year is a lot of money. John said it is that is why they are having these meetings. Ken said we have done very well with what we have done so far but it would be nice to have a break.

Ken asked if the Town votes this down in March, can the Select Board go forward with it anyway? The Select Board said not they can't but we would lose the grant for \$250,000.00. Ken said he is all about putting equipment under cover but that is a lot of money. John said that is what it costs to build a building today. Ken asked if Morton building was looked into. Yes, it was but that is just the shell, not the entire package.

John said eventually the Town garage will be in Newfound Lake and we don't know if we will ever get this grant again. Every year we wait, the price goes up. Right now, we have the grant and we have the low bond rates which are not guaranteed again. Ken says he understands, he lives near there and watches the water rise but if someone said to him that they would give him \$250,000.00 but he has to spend \$900,000.00 then he

would say that isn't a good deal. Bubba said they are not saying we have to spend the \$900,000.00, that is what the building has come to. If it comes to \$750,000.00, we can still get the \$250,000.00. Bill asked if the Town only agrees to raise \$250,000.00 would they still get \$250,000.00. It was explained that it doesn't work that way. It would have to be based on bids from contractors. John explained they haven't agreed on this exact building but it has to be a building that fits the Town's purposes.

Sara explained that in order to get the grant and apply by the deadline, we have to have a quote as a starting point. We tried to use the specs and quote from last time, which was \$1.4 million, but it had been too long so they wanted something more current. This time we used a different architect and it came in right under \$1.2 million which was comparable and shows this is what the costs are now, but this is only based on the architect. When it actually goes out for bid, we will know more and could come in less. If it comes in less, we still get the \$250,000.00 so that would be less money the Town has to raise. This is just a starting point. Sara explained the bond rates are the lowest and we haven't had an opportunity for a grant and she has been looking constantly in the six years she has been here. There are so many variables such as the grant, bond rates, bids coming in lower, the 12.5% mark up, etc. that is all going on the high end so it mostly likely will come in lower. This grant wasn't even planned. This was extra money that they came upon and reached out to use based on us reaching out to them in the past. They really want to help the Town and our project due to the disasters and flooding fit right into what they are looking for. If we don't do it this year, they will give our money to someone else. Bubba added in that he is confident that this building will be lower than the quote and we will still get the \$250,000.00 and only have to bond the remainder. Bubba added that this building work was done in 1998 and was \$270,000.00, in this day and age that same money is almost \$450,000.00 which shows the increase.

Bill said he when he sees this building, he sees a beautiful building, and he understands that when we have an architect, they have to get compensated and last time was a lot of money and the townspeople have already spoken up against it but now are paying another architect to develop something that we already talked about. Bubba said it is different, it is in a different spot, a different building, a different architect and we now have the grant opportunity. John mentioned that every time we come back to the Town to ask for money, we need to have an architect give us plans and a quote to back it up. We wouldn't get the grant unless an architect is used to come up with the costs and plans. Bill asks what the costs have been so far. Sara explained that it has been about \$6,850.00 so far since they only did the bare minimum to give us these plans and not everything the last engineer/architect did. Bill said what is the plan moving forward, how many times are we going to do this? John stated that we will keep doing this until we get a Town Garage because the Town needs one.

Miles asked what is the difference is, dimension wise, that allows everything to fit in this garage then the last one? Bubba said that when he says he can get everything in, he can barely get out after, that is how close everything is stuffed together. The bucket is up on the backhoe so that a truck can fit under it. There is a brace for it but if it fell it would crush the truck, so it is all in there but not very safe if something happened. Also, he tore the office out of the downstairs and moved it upstairs to allow more room and due to flooding. There is only inches and it is not fun getting it all in there. John said they could explore the option to stack them but the footprint would need to be larger than what we have now.

Miles asked if there would be three vehicles for winter road maintenance? Yes, there are three. Miles asked if we are going to run all three trucks at the same time? Bubba said not all of the time but sometimes they do. Miles said if only using two trucks at a time, can't you move one of the trucks out that has already been defrosted to move the other one in? Bubba said yes, it is an option but not preferred. Ken said if you can get out but just barely, couldn't you just add 10 feet to that building? We will look at other options but we like to keep everything inside to take care of equipment that was purchased with the tax payers' money. John said to keep in mind that every time you move this stuff around with hardly any room you have a chance of hitting something.

Sherry said John mentioned that school costs are a big part of our taxes. There is a way that we could do something and be involved. Someone in here, in the Town, could volunteer to be on the budget committee. We are the only town without someone on the budget committee. This would at least get our voice in with the other towns to try to keep our budget down. John said that would help but it is really voting the budget down that helps. If you are interested in this, it is volunteer, but you can contact the Select Board office and the SAU office. We have one member on the school board but if we don't have anyone on the budget committee that has a say.

Slim asked how much money was spent on site work that was done by Mike Ethier? Bubba said it is under \$15,000. How much more to get it in shape? Bubba said he can only go by what is on the sheet for now until someone comes out and bids on the sitework. Bubba said he is a tax payer too and he does everything he does for as cheap as he can. When it comes down to it and when we have the money, we can get bids on this. Tony said we don't think it will be this much but won't know for sure until we get bids.

Tony mentioned that when we first applied and were told new plans were needed and thought it would be another \$70,000.00 in costs, we said no so that we wouldn't spend more town money. They called us back and had a conference call. They said out of all the Towns that we qualify more than others and offered to put the \$250,000.00 in an escrow account. This is the first time they have done this because they want us to get this grant. The only stipulation was that we had to bring this to the Town to vote on in March and update some plans. We said we weren't going to spend what we did before so they allowed us to update those plans to save money. Tony stated that the Select Board is trying hard and are all tax payers too and they don't want their taxes going up either. He feels that if we don't do it this year, he doesn't know when we ever will.

Sara explained that we had to have a starting point to get the grant. We did try with three bays beforehand but every time we go back the cost goes up because the architect has to do more work. Sara said we need to keep in mind that we have the grant, the low municipal bond rates, even the interest rate we gave in this meeting are higher than they are right now because we aren't doing it this year. These could be even lower than what we stated earlier. We cannot put it out to bid until we know the work is going to be done. Everyone is so busy that they won't come out for a bid for a project that might not happen.

Mike Brogna said you don't think locals will give bids. Tony said they will have the opportunity to but USDA needed a quote to move forward. Tony said that we wouldn't be able to follow bids that are provided now. Mike said residents in Town do this work. Bubba said even if they do, they cannot give hard numbers for next year. Tony said we have to go by the architect quote but when it is time it will be put out for bid and the amount, we go for the bond for will be based on actual numbers. Tony explained we will not bond more than we have to. Sara explained that when it goes for bid, we will have to get at least three bids as part of the requirement so they wouldn't take just one from a local and do the grant off of that. For our own purposes to get an idea we could.

Bill asked again if the \$250,000.00 is only if we do this exact building. It was again explained that it isn't this exact building. We can make changes. Bill asked if we could come up with a plan to build a structure that adequately protects our trucks then we will still get the money. John and Tony said yes. Bill asked why can't we suffer at first and do a work in progress and do in steps so we can do it as we afford it. We could start with the shell first and then do it in parts. John said that we wouldn't get the grant, it has to be an entire building. Also, there is the potential that some years people vote it down and it takes even longer. Tony mentioned that the footprint is limited due to the ledge. Bill asked if we can go closer to road, we cannot. Tony said this was the best they could do and as it is now the cement work is expensive on this which is needed.

Bill said there are people that were not aware of this meeting because it wasn't well advertised. He was only made aware because of his neighbor. It was explained that it was put on the website, on the bulletin board at

the Town House and the Transfer Station, in the newspaper, on the Groton NH Events page along with handing out flyers at the election and Bubba sitting with the plans at the table answering questions so it was advertised in many different ways. This is also a first meeting and there will be more. Bill said that this was turned down by the Town. Again, it was explained that it is a different plan, that was over two years ago and there is a grant this time. Tony said we will keep bringing it forward until we have a building. Bill said instead of dismissing ideas, try to find ways to accommodate people's budgets. John said that is why we are here meeting and moved on to the next person.

Mike Brogna mentioned that if we build a water tight building why can't we use it? John said that we wouldn't get the grant and we wouldn't be able to use it until it was complete and had plumbing, etc. John explained we did think about doing it in pieces with a slab one year and the next year do another step but that was before we heard about this grant. Also, if you do it that way you have the potential to spend more than \$100,000.00 on the year you put the shell up. Also, you could put the shell up and then the next years the Town votes all of the next steps down so now you have a shell and nothing else. Mike asked why we couldn't work out of just the shell. John said the state won't let us in there. Mike said it is our Town. John explained it has to be approved since it is a municipal building and not just a personal home. Tony explained again that the grant is for an entire building. Mike said this has been going on since he was on the board so he knows it has been a problem for many years. However, he said Miles taught him there is a difference between a want and a need and this needs to be kept in mind. We need to figure out what is actually needed in for the building size. John said from the last plan to this we stripped it down. The only thing we can do to change it from a want to a need is to strip it down one bay but the rest is a need because of being in the flood zone. Mike said he understands but we have to keep the cost down.

Bubba said that he doesn't think the 4 bays is extravagant but obviously he will keep doing what he does regardless. Mike went over the equipment again and asked if we are planning on buying new equipment? It was explained the backhoe is aging so will need to be replaced sooner than later. It wasn't the best option when it was bought and wasn't always taken care of in the past or serviced as it should have been in the past. It was asked how old it is. Miles said it is almost 10 years. Bubba said it is 2011.

Jim Joyce asked if it is a 10-year bond, what happens if in year 5 windfarm ceases to exist? John said that if that happened, we would do the best we could to keep the budget down. Bubba is a good point to keep in mind that while we do have the windfarm is the time to get infrastructure done.

Ann asked if the pilot is for 15 years? Miles mentioned there was a partial pilot initially but then in March of 2013 they signed a 15 years Pilot so unless there was some unexpected catastrophe, the windfarms current pilot would expire in March of 2028 so we have less than 8 years. Ann asked if the Pilot could be extended. Miles said this is a possibility but no guarantee.

Slim heard comment that we have other things coming down the tubes but the only thing we have left really is River Road which shouldn't be touched until the damn is done which is next year. Slim asked about the grant we looked into for that. Sara explained it was through North Country Council but it is only for State Roads. Toney said we can apply for other USDA grants but not now since we currently have one. Sara explained that we can apply for the NBRC grant, like the one we have for Sculptured Rocks again too but not until at least 75% of the current grant is spent and we are not even close to that yet since the work just started. Tony said that Sara and Bubba are always looking for grants and have applied for some many of them. We have a lot of contacts since we have applied for so many grants and are building relationships, connections and rapport which benefits us. Tony said that Sara and Bubba are still looking for other grants for this building as well and looked into one recently but we didn't qualify.

Mike asked what the warrantee on the salt and sand shed are. Bubba said he has to look into that. Bill asked what the cost on those are. It is right under \$50,000 for both. Bill asked why we can't use the old building for the salt and sand shed. Bubba said the biggest problem would be the backhoe having to go back and forth which is a lot for it to do.

Miles has a few questions about the salt sheds. He understands the foundation is concrete waste block. He asked if it is going down below frost line? No, it is not. Miles said he also read in the minutes that the Town is looking to have it paved. Bubba said yes, at least the salt shed. Tony said just the floor so you don't dig down too deep. Miles thinks this is an area that should be reconsidered and he doesn't think it needs to be paved. You could put markings on the blocks to communicate the line to not go below. Miles said we are in a predicament with the town and this proposal isn't dramatically different then last one and the last one went down in flames. He said that was one of the most lop-sided votes he has seen since he has been in this town for 23 years. Miles said there is another saying that is appropriate here. "Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good." We need to strive between the perfect balance point between what the Town believes are the needs of the town. He has been where they are and appreciates everything they are doing. He feels they are doing right thing to bring it back before the town to try to come up with a solution to this issue but it is not financially dramatically different from the first one. When they did the windfarm, they had to come up with the best deal without blowing it. Recent history, the citizens committee came up with many proposals for the Zoning Ordinance and in his opinion, they over reached and that was another lop sided vote and it didn't pass. You may want certain things but there is a difference between wants and needs. Can we get by with certain features in order to have a better chance of having the public accept it. Since this would be bonded, you need a 2/3 vote of approval and last time it was not even close. We are doing the right things. Miles said that something the Town needs to keep in mind is that the cost for new construction, even of new houses, is ridiculous. In Rockingham county you can't build a house unless it is \$500,000.00 so we can use that to enlighten people that is what the cost of construction is this day and age. The end of the day people vote on it and with what happened last time, we need to sharpen the pencils and do the best we can to present the best economic proposal to the Town. Otherwise, it will be déjà vu all over again in his opinion.

Tony said that we just got this quote and decided to start meetings now so more people are informed and involved before Town meeting so it isn't like last time. A lot of people only heard 1.4 million last time and didn't hear more. They want people at these meetings to be informed, share feedback and be involved. Tony said he was guilty of it last time. This time we got a grant, we are trying and he feels this is our best chance. This is just the first meeting and there will be one to two more before March Town Meeting.

Mike asked if the total is for all buildings? It was explained it is. He asked for the costs of the salt and sand shed. The salt shed is \$19,512.00 and the sand shed is \$30,283.00. It was asked if we would still get the grant if we don't do the salt and sand sheds. John said yes. He asked if we can cut out the salt and sand shed? Bubba said we really need the salt shed and it needs to be under cover. Mike said can we leave the salt where it is. Bubba explained that it is still in the flood zone if we leave it and we can lose material. This is an option but not a good idea since it is still in the flood zone.

Bubba said everyone keeps saying it hasn't change significantly but he feels it has. The original quote was \$1.4 million which is now \$1.2 million before the grant of \$250,000.00. The salt and sand were in a hard building so we have already cut that down \$200,000.00 to \$50,000.00. Bubba said he isn't saying that their ideas can't be done or won't be done. John said we want to make sure that when we are sharpening the pencil there is a point to it. Leaving the salt and sand at the bottom of the hill, whenever it snows, someone has to hope the state came through and get a truck down there and the backhoe to load it. Bubba said we also spent about \$1,000.00 a year on the plastic to cover the sand. John said it needs to be near the building, it is not practical to be down the hill. It hurts the backhoe too. Mike asked if we can get a used backhoe to leave down there. That would be a cost, even used can be expensive and there is still the risk of flooding.



It was asked what about bringing the current salt shed up here? Bubba explained that it isn't sturdy enough and he had to put money into it this year.

Bill said he asked a few months ago if the town could start an opt in email address to communicate with the people in the Town and said he wouldn't name names but was told it was a bad idea. Sara spoke up and said that it was her and she never said it was a bad idea. She said to put something together to bring to the Select Board and he never did so nothing has happened with it. John asked what the opt in email would do, what would be emailed? He said information on the Town. This information is on the website so if you have internet access for emails you can check the website. Bill said if you send an email, maybe it won't get opened, but you send it to give them a chance. Bill said sometimes he wonders if the Town wants to have participation from the Towns people. John said that if you are interested in opening an email, you can open minutes from the meetings that are online, you can look at the agenda that are online, you can attend meetings, you can access the website get information from website. Bill said are these the reasons you wouldn't do it. John said no but they are going to move on to someone else that has questions about the building.

Sherry asked if there is an architect involved. Sara said yes, it is Studio Nexus Architects.

A resident asked what the plan is about getting information out about the other meetings. She said maybe an email address isn't a good idea. John mentioned that it was posted on the website, at the Town House, Transfer Station and in the newspaper. She said people don't come to the Town office unless they have a reason to be here. She said we should think about flyers. John said that the flyers are costly and last time we did flyers we were told we wasted town money. John said we understand where they are coming from. Sara said we do understand but at some point, the residents have to take responsibility for their involvement, how much do they want to be involved, how much do they want to check the website, etc. Maybe they don't come to the Town House often but people go to the transfer station weekly and it is posted there. It was asked where it is posted at the Transfer Station so it was explained where. Richards truck is parked there so we will ask him to move it. Bubba said we are trying hard to get this out so besides everywhere it was posted, that is why he sat here the entire day of the elections. The resident said when she mentions mailing it would be just like the flyer. Tony mentioned we handed out over 100 flyers at the elections and look how many showed up. The resident said she voted and didn't get one and didn't see the table. Sara said the greeter was handing them out and this table was covered. She said she wasn't greeted. We apologized and said that she must have stepped away when they came through. Someone should have been covering for her.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 17<sup>th</sup> but we will put information out about this once it is a definite and will discuss the best way to advertise these. Tony said we are telling you what we know now and this is a real possibility. We have some things to look into before the next meeting. The residents explained that the Town should really look at the wants and needs and look at what can be cut out but still provide the Town with an adequate building.

**Hearing no more questions, John motioned to close the public hearing at 8:30pm.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

*Tyner Lawrence- Internet on Sculptured Rocks Road*

Tyner had reached out to the Select Board in July regarding internet on Sculptured Rocks Road and asking for the Towns involvement. He is on Jewell Hill. Spectrum doesn't go beyond Beaver Pond Road. At that time in July, he was working with Spectrum and had thought that it was looking promising but then they said that in order to do it, it would cost \$50,000.00-\$75,000.00 to pay for services and he knows that himself and other residents so not have that kind of money so he requested to meet with the Select Board regarding this.

Sara had reached out to our contacts at the State to see if there are any options available with COVID19 and so many people working from home or doing remote learning for school. She had a conference call with them last week. The deadline for the GOEFFER funding was 7/2/20 so before Tyner reached out to the Town. The State said that due to the expectations of the funding the Town probably wouldn't have got it anyway. Tyner said he missed the GOEFFER as well. Not having internet affects property value. He knows there are about 20-30 homes that are without internet.

Sara had a zoom meeting with Carol Miller, who is the Director of Broadband Technology with the State of NH, and said she would be willing to meet with the Select Board and Tyner if they wanted. She said it will be a lot of work but she recommended Tyner putting together a committee with other residents that do not have broadband and meet once a month and the Town can be involved too. She said that more than one resident should contact the providers to see about getting services extended. She said it is very expensive and a lot of work. She said the Town would probably have to bond any costs but the first step is to figure out what the costs will be. The Town could apply for a planning grant so that we can map out the infrastructure, the need, and get the costs. The grant will only cover the planning to get the ball rolling and the costs. There will then be other costs associated with it. USDA, CDFA, etc. are places that may offer grants for this. So first gather troops, lay out what to do, how many people effected, what the wants and needs are and apply for a planning grant. We would be better off partnering up with NHEC, Spectrum or Consolidated to do this and she recommended it would be best to look at fiber to premise to help the Town out in the future. The end result would be a bond for the costs.

Sara explained she also reached out to NHEC to see where their proposal stands and has been talking with cell phone companies such as US Cellular for options and they are looking into it.

Bill jolly said that he bought a booster because everyone is on right now and it makes it hard to get on.

John asked about satellite. Tyner said it is quite a distance it makes it difficult for what they need it for.

Tyner said that accessibility is bad too. The service they do have is down and sometimes can be a lengthy time. He is relieved to know the Town is working on it and will continue to work on it and see what happens with NHEC with the October vote. Spectrum has done a plan in the past so they have the information but nothing was done. Tyner may create a flyer. Sara said for him to keep her posted and she will keep him posted. May need to start with the committee and then work towards a planning grant to get all the information needed.

Tony wanted to let Tyner know that he is on Hebron Fire/EMS and right now there will not be any EMS across the bridge. Tyner thinks someone reached out to the engineer. Tony said they need an engineer certificate.

#### *Building Permit Map 1 Lot 10*

The owner submitted building permit for their property on Route 118 for a 16x24 shed. **John motioned to sign the building permit for Map 1 Lot 10, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Building Permit Map 5 Lot 143*

The owner submitted building permit for their property on Sculptured Rocks Road for a 12x40 shed/chicken coop. **John motioned to sign the building permit for Map 5 Lot 143, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Local septic approval- Map 5 Lot 45*

Matt Barnard dropped off a Septic Plan and local approval for Map 5 Lot 45. All the information is correct. **John motioned to sign the local approval for Map 5 Lot 45, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

*Local septic approval- Map 6 Lot 63-12*

Matt Barnard dropped off a Septic Plan and local approval for Map 6 Lot 63-12. All the information is correct. **John motioned to sign the local approval for Map 6 Lot 63-12, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

*Intent to cut- Map 9 Lot 1*

The Town received an Intent to Cut for Map 9 Lot 1 for a 10-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 Intent to Cut for Map 9 Lot 1, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

*Avitar revaluation/update agreement 2021*

Avitar sent the 2021 Revaluation/Update Agreement and as outlined in the multi-year assessing agreement, a separate agreement must be signed pursuant to RSA 21-J:11. Sara explained that this is paid for out of the Assessing Capital Reserve Fund. IT is \$31,800. **John motioned to sign the Avitar Agreement for 2021, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

**DEPARTMENT ITEMS:**

*Police Department*

Chief Bagan stated that he has a quote for the new parking tickets which is \$229.00. The Select Board said they look good and gave Chief the go ahead to order them. Ron asked Chief if he can order some pens, magnets, safety items or something like the Police Department has handed out in the past. Chief thinks he has some left but will look into it.

*Highway Department*

Bubba went over the following:

- The new truck should be done tomorrow. They will be picking it up next week.
- The Sculptured Rocks Road Culverts are all done other than the guardrails. These won't be done until we are done paving that road.
- The Sculptured Rocks Road project is in progress.

**QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:**

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

**Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 9:01pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith  
Administrative Assistant