

Town of Groton
Select Board Work Session Minutes
January 5, 2021

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

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

Budget items/Warrant Articles

Sara mentioned that she will have the proposed budget ready for the next meeting that will have the 2020 totals on it as well. She did also receive a few more warrant articles so she will have this ready for the next meeting as well so the Select Board can review this all. Due to having to cancel a meeting in December, they may have to schedule another work session after the next meeting and before the Public Hearing to finalize everything.

Next building meeting

The Select Board agreed to do the next building meeting on February 2nd when we do the public hearing for the bond. The attorney said that all the public hearings (budget, building and bond) can all be done on the same night. The bond has to be held 15-60 days before the vote so February 2 will be fine. She did recommend that we either do three separate notices or one notice identifying three hearings and that we would hold three separate hearings so we would have to open and close each one. The Select Board agreed it was better to do all public hearings on the same night so the people only have to come out once. They also agreed to do just one notice identifying three hearings. Sara created a draft posting for one notice identifying all three hearings which she presented to the Select Board for approval. The Select Board approved the posting and gave Sara the okay to send it to the Newspaper when needed.

Vacation time

Due to the busy year with FEMA, grants, COVID, etc., Sara and Bubba both have vacation time that they will have to carry over. Sara 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. Sara and Bubba will plan on taking a few days here and there after Town Meeting in March to use the time up. Bubba will also use his carry over time by the end of April. **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.**

Groton/Alexandria perambulation update

Sara reached out to Alan Barnard as requested regarding the Groton/Alexandria perambulation and the concerns about a formal survey not being done. Alan's first response was "Both the Town of Groton and Alexandria accepted my detailed report along with a plan in a binder presented to each town at a Selectmen's meeting that included all the research materials that were obtained from various resources. A reduction was applied as the line was not totally blazed and painted due to the extensive cut over by Maxam." Sara responded with that the Town understands that but is asking why a formal survey was never done. He responded with "It was done with a handheld GPS checked against the survey done by Draper as all this was supplied and accepted for the formal survey." And then also sent "Pull out the binder so they can look through all the information etc."

The original quote was for \$7,250 and the Town only paid him \$2,500 and Sara assumes that Alexandria also paid \$2,500 so only \$5,000 was paid of the \$7,250.

Sara asked if the Select Board is okay with this information or if they want to ask Alan to meet with them to answer some questions. The Select Board agreed that they are okay with the information and feel that they should leave it as is.

Notch in the Plymouth/Groton Line

At the last meeting Miles brought up an issue with the Plymouth/Groton line. There were some minutes about a notch in the Plymouth/Groton Line and the notes state that the Select Board opinion after reviewing this is that they felt that there is a notch there. Miles said he can state from the perambulation records in Town that there is no notch. Sara pulled the emails from when this was discussed with Avitar Mapping and the last recommendation from Chad was that the notch was part of the original map going back to when Terramap/Avitar took over the maps in 2008 and this notch was verified by a survey done for the wind farm. He said he would be happy to investigate it further but the contract is only to maintain the maps as they were an make changes/updates given to them by the Town. He said they could put together a proposal that would be hourly based but he first recommended checking with Plymouth and comparing the perambulation data and then check with the surveying company for their notes and input. He said that because of the survey and state laws, it holds highest legal authority over how the map looks.

The Town decided to put it on hold at that time and hasn't done anything else with it since then. The Select Board said that according to the perambulation that Miles did and all of the research then and the prior perambulation showed there is no notch. The Select Board agreed that Sara could reach back out to Avitar and ask for a proposal of costs and make a decision from there on how to proceed.

Explanation Letter for the Building

At the last building meeting, Tony Tavares suggested that the Select Board put together a letter explaining everything that was said in that meeting about why we need the building, why we are presenting it now, etc. Sara drafted a letter for the Select Board to review. They all reviewed and had suggested changes. Sara will make these changes and have it ready for the next meeting.

401/405 Sculptured Rocks Road concern

At the last meeting Sara explained that a resident came in to see her with 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 Select Board asked Sara to reach out to DES. Sara did reach out to DES and Kevin from DES called her and sent an email with a lot of information and attachments. The overall advice they gave was for Tony, as the Health Officer, to interview the complainant. Then to set up a meeting with the owner and explain the concerns and see if they can answer any questions and maybe even allow a site visit. Tony did drive by because the complainant called again and said they were digging at the time. When Tony drove by, he didn't see any digging but he did talk to the complainant who gave a lot of information. Sara and Tony drafted a letter to the owners and one owner has called back so far. As far as 401 Sculptured Rocks Road there have not been any renovations done and they are willing to show this. They did say they let Avitar in to do an inspection so they are being assessed accurately. No changes have been made to room sizes or anything so they said no new septic plan would be needed. As far as 405 Sculptured Rocks Road and the concern about the water tank that is being used as an illegal septic tank, she was not aware of this and will have John call or email regarding this. However, due to the holidays and his work schedule he is not around for a few weeks so it may be a little bit until he can get in touch with us. Tony explained to her that an inspection will need to be done for these concerns but we have just got over 2 feet of snow so unfortunately, he said the inspection will have to wait until Spring.

Email from Mike V- Fenoff retainage

After the last meeting Sara reached out to Mike V to confirm the retainage amount before the Select Board make a decision about changing the retainage. Sara explained that the different bills showed different amounts and the most recent bill was lowered to 2% so the Town didn't pay that until the most accurate information is shown to allow the Select Board to make an accurate decision. Mike emailed back and stated that Pay Application 4 included a retainage reduction on the entire project except the guardrail, which is why the numbers don't follow the typical 10% to 2% reduction numbers you'd expect. So, we paid them for 98% of the project but 0% of the guardrail portion of the project in Pay App 4. The Pay App that shows the \$4,020 amount was rejected.

Pay App 5 sets the retainage at 2% of the total project amount and the invoice is primarily for the guardrail installation. 10% of the total project is \$51,390.40 and 2% is \$10,278.08.

Since the work is completed and the Select Board do not see any big issues arising, they agreed to the 2% retainage. Sara will go ahead and send the last payment now that this has been agreed upon. **John motioned to accept the 2% retainage and have Sara send the payment application 5 with the 2% retainage out to Kirk Fenoff and Sons, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Patti Bailey Harris- responded to the letter

Patti Bailey Harris called and left a message. She broke her leg so won't be able to come to a Select Board meeting for a while but doesn't agree with the letter she received which stated that she had presented an email dated December 16, 2011 to the Select Board which mentioned ten (10) plots as a part of the sale agreement. The Select Board looked into this as promised and located both an email from December 13, 2012, along with Select Board meeting minutes from December 18, 2012, which both mention that it was agreed that two (2) cemetery plots would be part of the sales agreement. It mentioned that each plot would take one regular burial or up to four (4) cremations. The Select Board agreed to honor the agreement that was mentioned in the 2012 email and in the meeting minutes from the Select Board meeting on December 18, 2012, and make sure that you receive two (2) cemetery plots, which would include one regular burial or up to 4 cremations per plot. It was also agreed that these plots will be along the east side of the cemetery as you requested. She feels she went from ten down to only two and doesn't agree with this.

The Select Board said that since there are meeting minutes that state the final decision, they wanted to follow that which is why they sent her the letter with the minutes attached that showed this. They agreed to meet with her to discuss it when she is home and able to attend a Select Board meeting.

Health Officer Form/Dues

Tony had a form for the Health Officer Association that he would like Sara to fill out and send in the dues. The Select Board is okay with that.

NLRA Meeting/Atwell Orange Brook

Tony said that he met with Rebecca from NLRA about the concerns with the river/brook. They went out there and she has since called with some follow up questions. He took some pictures. The last storm washed it out some more and there is clay coming down a lot. He feels she is taking this seriously and trying to get some money for this project.

Meeting with Pam and Ruth regarding ACH

Pam had requested to meet with the Select Board and Ruth regarding the changes since ACH. Pam, Ruth and Sara filled the Select Board in on the process and what steps they have each been taking so far to streamline the process. Ruth explained that it is a one check with the credit card and when credit cards are used, deposits and ACH charges are done to balance this out. Right now, the credit card is only offered online and it was

agreed to hold off on having it at the office until we smooth out the process and wanted to wait until the new year to do it.

Pam mentioned that it is important to have online access now due to all of this. Also, when this started for some reason it changed our statements and we were not getting them anymore. Pam is working on setting up a log on for statements, etc.

The other concern is that right now Ruth is the only one initiating and approving the process. Usually it is two people, one to initiate and one to approve as an added security step for checks and balances. The Select Board agreed that we should do it that way as well. Sara recommended that there should be two people trained on each process in case one is out sick or on vacation. The Select Board agreed it should be Ruth and Joanna to initiate the process and Sara and Pam to approve it. Sara will do it during the week when she is working and Pam will do it on Fridays and when Sara is out or on vacation.

The first step is to get us all set up. Pam will start this process and asked that Ruth email her with how she wants hers and Joanna's names set up and asked Sara to email her for how she wants her set up. This will be the first step and then Ruth will have to make sure everyone is set up with what they need for the verification codes and she will have to train them on the process.

Meeting with Bubba and Bill Oakley- Emergency Management

The Select Board met with Bubba and Bill Oakley regarding the process for Emergency Management and for ideas of how the best way would be to handle the next storm. It was agreed the process would be that usually Bubba is the first one to notice an Emergency. Bubba will call Sara immediately if it is during office hours and Sara will start making the calls. If it is after office hours, Bubba will call John immediately, John will then call Tony and Bill, Bill will call Ron and Chief Bagan, and Chief Bagan will call Sara. If Bubba isn't the first one to notice the emergency or to be informed of it, the one who notices it will call Bubba and start the phone tree from there. Bill will come to the Townhouse and call the State, Paul Hatch and open the EOC. Sara will put together a list of the order to call and everyone's phone numbers and send it out.

Sara mentioned that the two portable radios just sit in her office and Bill and Bubba have other radios too so she asked if they thought everyone involved should bring a radio home and when there are storm warnings make sure it is charged and on. The Select Board agreed to this. Bill will bring his extra radios into Sara.

Tony mentioned to Bubba that once they have all the radios that he would ride with Bubba to OME to check and see if the batteries are all good and to see if any need to be reprogrammed. Bubba's radios need to have Lakes Region added to them. Also, Bubba should reach out to Lakes Region to give them the numbers for the Highway Department. Sara can help him with this.

Tony said the Chief should add Groton Direct to his scan list so they can communicate better.

Sara and Bill mentioned that they looked into updating the EOP since this was brought up and we started the grant process before COVID. Paul Hatch said that he is very busy with COVID and other items so this is on hold for now. Bill said that he was told the money doesn't go away so it is waiting for us when we are ready to start. He said the one we have is good just needs some minor updates. Bill said he has a copy of the current EOP and Mike Lemieux was going to see if he had one.

Meeting with Bubba

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

- With the storm and other weather issues, no one was able to go out to Nedeau Lane to look at the culvert and road concerns. This will have to wait until late Spring/early Summer.

- Bubba talked to Brian about the state road maintenance concerns. Brian said that he has an SOP he has to follow so they can't go out too early, etc. Brian said that Bubba can call him anytime. The Select Board told Bubba in the future to call the Division 2 office first and then they will call Brian or whoever is needed to go out.
- Sara drafted the Highway Department on call policy. The Select Board reviewed it and is good with it. **John motioned to sign the Highway Department on call policy effective December 15, 2020, Tony 2nd, so voted.**
- At the last meeting it was agreed to change the procurement policy from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Sara had sent the policy to the attorney along with the minutes from the meeting and asked if this has to be done at Town Meeting. The attorney said the Select Board is okay to go ahead and amend it. Sara updated the policy to reflect the amendment. **John motioned to amend the procurement policy from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and to sign the updated/amended procurement policy with an effective date of January 1, 2021, Tony 2nd, so voted.**
- Bubba said that 1214 North Groton Road has stuff on the roof, a truck out back and garbage outside. It is not as bad as it was but he wanted to let the Select Board know items are accumulating again. Sara had reached out to the attorney and they said a new order would have to be placed to go back out. The Select Board agreed that this should wait until the Spring to see how it is. It would be hard to see much with snow.
- The new truck has had some minor problems but all were simple issues and are all set.
- They are getting ready to work on some other projects that they had to put off before.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant