

Town of Groton
Select Board Work Session Minutes
September 21, 2021

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

John called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Closings on Town Properties

The Select Board met with the realtors and buyers to do the closings for the properties located at Map 1 Lot 91 and Map 10 Lot 29.

Map 10 Lot 29: The realtor had the paperwork for the closing. The buyer, Jeffrey Williams was not in attendance but did previously sign the paperwork. Ruth was in attendance to notarize the deed. **John motioned to sign the closing paperwork including the deed, the 1099-S, and the settlement statement for Map 10 Lot 29, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Map 1 Lot 91: The realtor had the paperwork for the closing. The buyer, David Finnell Jr., was in attendance. Ruth was in attendance to notarize the deed. **John motioned to sign the closing paperwork including the deed, the 1099-S, and the settlement statement for Map 1 Lot 91, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

ARPA Funding

Now that we have received the ARPA funding, Sara reached out to NHMA to see what the next step is for this. NHMA stated that House Bill 2 contained a provision allowing municipalities to use RSA 31:95-b to accept ARPA funds, whether or not their town meeting had previously authorized their select board to use RSA 31:95-b. That statute does not require that the select board state at the hearing exactly what the funds are going to be used for; just that the board vote to accept the funds. Merely accepting the funds and stating that they will be used for purposes consistent with the Treasury's Rules would be legally sufficient for the purposes of RSA 31:95-b, and allow the town flexibility in using the funds. When the money is actually going to be spent, the expenditure should be discussed and disclosed at a public meeting of the select board in order to allow the public to understand how those funds will be spent. The Select Board agreed to schedule the public hearing for October 19, 2021 to allow time for it to be posted in the newspaper and still allow enough time before the hearing. Sara will also post this online.

FEMA Site Visits

Sara and Bubba have site visits with FEMA Monday 9/27 starting at 11am. Sara will post the office as closed starting at 11am that day. It probably will not take the entire day but we are not sure how long it will take.

Junkyard properties

The attorney is working on the junkyard that is currently in violation and still was in violation at the second inspection. He will be meeting with the Select Board at the next work session on 10/5/21 at 4:30pm in regards to this. The Select Board would like Sara to reach out to the attorney to see if they can we send a letter before the meeting on October 5th, like we have in the past. **John motioned to come in and sign letter if attorney okays it, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Sara also informed him that the other property that we have been having issues with is being cleaned up by a new tenant. The attorney said he will discuss this with the Select Board on October 5, 2021 as well. The Select Board will have to figure out the date it was cleaned up, decide if they still want to go after the owner for the clean-up charges, attorney charges, etc.

Forester information

The Forester Jordan King emailed after the last inspection that he did stating that we need to update his contract. It ran out, and his introductory rate of \$40 per hour is way below the going rate for foresters. The average rate for a forester now is \$70 per hour, which from now on is what he needs to charge if we want to continue having him perform this service. He needs a one-hour minimum per Report reviewed, and \$70 per hour for site visits. Also, he said that if the Town wants to perform forest management (which he has been recommending for years now), he could do a little better on the rate. Sara asked the Select Board if they are okay with the rate increase. If so, he will send in an updated contract. The Select Board is okay with this increase and will sign the contract at the next meeting.

Sara had asked him if the forest management cost was the same as the quote he gave before. He said that if they want to perform management, they should give me the lot numbers and what they want done and I will provide new estimates since it has been a few years since he provided an estimate. The Select Board said we can put together a list of the town properties and see what his quote is for that to see if it is worth it. Sara will put this list together.

November meeting change

The first meeting in November is scheduled for November 2, 2021 but this is election day. We usually still have a work session that day at any time that all Selectmen are there but we do not have Select Board meetings on election night. The Select Board agreed to have a work session at 2:00pm on 11/2/21 and then have Select Board Meetings on 11/9/21 and 11/16/21.

Meeting with Deb- Building Permit updates/changes

Deb Johnson met with the Select Board regarding the building permit updates and guideline updates. The Select Board are okay with the permit and guideline updates as Deb submitted. The Select Board and Deb went over the permit and guidelines and RSA's. Deb had some concerns because Groton doesn't have a building code and she reached out to NHMA and OSI regarding this. They recommended calling this a zoning compliance certification. The Select Board thought we could call this a zoning compliance certification and permit to build since that is what it is.

Deb had asked NHMA and OSI if there is any liability to calling it a building permit and they said effectively it is a grey area if we don't follow state code and we don't have a code enforcement office or a town code, could the town be held liable if anything happened. Tony explained that we don't need to adopt the state code we just need to follow state code and the old building permit guidelines did mention that and that the resident is responsible to follow all state and federal guidelines and get any state or federal permits that may be required. The Select Board wanted to make sure this statement was in the new guidelines as well.

Deb said that the state code isn't required to be adopted by the Town but she didn't get an exact answer. The Select Board said since we follow the State code and have that in the permit we should be covered. Deb will continue to look into RSA 674:51 and RSA 155A. Deb will read the RSAs and see if we need to reach out to the attorney or not to see what the permit should be called, before we spend money on funds. If Deb cannot find what we need, Sara will then reach out to the town attorney to see if there any issues with it being called a building permit and see if we can change it to zoning compliance certification and permit to build to cover everything. She will also see if we can find when the original building permit was adopted.

The Select Board agreed to keep the fees the same. They also agreed that there still no permit required for any structure under 100 square feet. They want to make sure this information is on the updated guidelines like it was on the old guidelines.

It was agreed that the following changes need to be made to the guidelines:

- On the first line of the updated guidelines, it refers to RSA 676:11 but the old guidelines state RSA 676:17. Deb said this must have been a typo and she will fix it.
- Deb will add the part back in on the updated guidelines about the state and federal guidelines and permits.
- Add back in the information about a permit not being required for a structure under 100 square feet.

It was agreed that the following changes need to be made to the permit:

- The last bullet under notes, need to change where it says “once installed” to “before installation”.

Deb will do more research on the RSA’s and make the changes to the permit. Once it is all set, she will send the final versions to the Select Board.

Deb also wanted to mention that they are thinking about putting together a zoning ordinance for Town Meeting. The Planning Board is hoping to move forward with this and would appreciate the resident’s input and involvement.

Meeting with Bubba

Bubba met with the Select Board to go over the following:

- The mold remediation has been taking place and is moving forward. They should be done with the removal tomorrow hopefully. They have to spray everything down. They have sent an updated quote to rebuild everything, which has gone up significantly since there was more mold than they thought. There was more on the inside that they couldn’t see from the outside. Bubba has reached out to Coursey to get a quote and to make sure the updated quote is accurate. This doesn’t include electrical work which will be separate because they took fans and such down. This also doesn’t include the alarm company charges which has to be fixed as well. The Select Board doesn’t think this is unreasonable price but seems weird that it was off so much. Bubba agreed but explained once they started taking stuff down, they could see what was behind the walls and the estimate does say that the estimate is subject to change. The Select Board and Bubba agreed that this needs to be fixed since it is getting cold out. John said this we cannot and needs to be fixed asap. **John motioned to get a quote from Charlie and if his quote is significantly less and can be done in the same time then it is okay to move forward with him, if not we need to proceed with ServPro, Tony 2nd, so voted.**
- Bubba is getting quotes on backhoe for a warrant article for Town Meeting. The Select Board agreed a new backhoe is needed.
- Bubba is also looking into quotes for putting a new body on the old international. It has 35,000 miles on it. It is looking to be around \$40,000-\$50,000 for new body. Two guys have already said that truck is reaching its life. We have to remember where we live and the roads here that it travels. Bubba said if we didn’t do anything it could maybe get a few more years. John asked if we need something that big. Tony said that we do to push things back. Tony thinks we should hold off for now, he thinks it still has more life left in it. He thinks we could get a few more years because it is steel. He does agree to get quotes for body to see what they are but maybe hold off on a warrant article this year so there is not too much on the warrant article and we need the backhoe.
- The bridge that leads to the Conservation Pond is done. They did good job.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 6:57pm, Ron 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant