

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

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

John called the meeting to order at 4:40pm.

Junkyard Concerns

The Select Board met with attorney Joe Driscoll regarding the two properties we have junkyard concerns with.

- The first property that has been a concern for years has now been cleaned up and the majority of her back taxes have been paid. The Select Board would be okay with dropping the \$50/day charge but still wants to hold her accountable for the charges for the clean-up and attorney costs.
- The second property had its second inspection and was still in violation. The attorney will draft a letter and send it to us. **John motioned to come in and sign the letter when it is ready, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Transfer Station Posting

The Select Board asked Sara to create a posting for the Transfer Station attendant position but for now they said to only post online and on bulletin boards. If needed, we can post it in the paper later.

Budget Meetings

Moderator's Budget

Tony Tavares attended to discuss the moderator budget. There are more elections in 2022, so there is an increase for almost every line.

Moderator Salary

The Moderator recommended an increase of \$340.00 making it \$500.00.

Workshops/training

The Moderator recommended a decrease of \$49.00 making it \$1.00.

Mileage

Stayed the same.

Ballot Clerks/Counters

The Moderator recommended an increase of \$1,000.00 making it \$1,600.00.

Assistant Moderator

Stayed the same

Other Concerns:

The next election will be the Town elections in March.

The Select Board was okay with the Moderator budget as is.

John motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) and (c) at 5:15pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

John motioned to return to public session at 5:30pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

John motioned to seal the non-public minutes, Tony 2nd, so voted.

Library Trustees Budget

Library Trustees didn't feel there was a need to meet since everything is staying the same.

Wages

Stayed the same

Library expenses

Stayed the same

Other Concerns:

There were no concerns with the library budget.

The Select Board was okay with the library budget as is.

Cemetery Budget

Jim Gaffey attended the meeting.

Repairs & Maintenance

Stayed the same

Wages

Stayed the same

Supplies

Stayed the same

Mileage

Stayed the same

Fuel

Stayed the same

Advertising

Stayed the same

Site Work- River Rd Cemetery

Stayed the same. They may need to revise this as they are waiting on a quote for survey of River Road cemetery from Alan Barnard. He is not sure what this quote will be. Right now, they have received two maps so far. Right now, he has been informed that majority of people are going with cremations.

Other Concerns:

Right now, we charge less than other Towns. For example, Rumney charges \$750 and \$550 goes to the person that hand digs the grave. If this is done on the weekend or the holiday it jumps by \$100. Campton also charges \$750 and \$850 if it is a holiday or weekend.

Some places hire Dignified Cemetery Services which act as contractor for the Towns that don't have anyone and they get \$700-\$900 depending on the burial. No matter how you cut it \$350 is not in line with other towns. However, this is a small town and we don't want to charge a lot of money but the Town does incur expenses for maintaining these cemeteries such as the clean-up, fallen trees, repair of headstones, etc. There is a thing called perpetual care and right now the Town doesn't guarantee perpetual care in writing but we really do this but don't charge for it.

Jim asked if the Town wants to be in line with other towns and retain some money to use toward future expenses. John said that the \$350 is low but that is a lot to jump. Jim explained the prices were established in 2010. Jim said that they do about 3 per year. Professional grave diggers go down 4 feet. Jim said he is not sure what the next step will be. Right now, they do not have anyone to dig the grave.

Jim said if the person hires a funeral home, they could require a certain company be used and charge for their service. This is money we could be getting that will go towards the funeral home. Jim said we should keep it cheap.

Sara explained the town is very detached from the process and the cemetery trustees handle it. Sara doesn't even have the form for them to fill out she takes the information and has the cemetery trustees call them.

Jim said the company that was hired put together a form that would cover the burials better and in detail to protect the town. He also put together other forms, authorization form which town gives owner of the plot to inter the remains and gives the Town a good record of who is authorized for this. The third item is a permit to put up a memorial stone. We have never had this before. There has never been a directive regarding size, height, etc. for the requirements and this will cover that to cover any future disputes.

The Select Board said instead of raising the price we should keep the price the same and then have them hire someone to dig the grave. We don't have enough of these to increase the price or to hire someone to do the digging for us.

The Select Board was okay with the Cemetery budget as it is.

Treasurer Budget

Pam Hamel was unable to attend but there is only one small change and it is pretty straight forward.

Stipend

Stayed the same

Deputy

Stayed the same

Mileage

Stayed the same

Supplies

The treasurer recommended an increase of \$5.00 making it \$15.00.

The Select Board was okay with the Treasurer budget as is.

Supervisors of the Checklist Budget

Pam Hamel was unable to attend but explained that there are more elections in 2022 so that is why there is an increase this year. There are other times that the Supervisors have to meet for other items.

Town Elections

Stayed the same

Town Meeting

Stayed the same

Wages: State Primary

The Supervisors proposed an increase to \$475.00.

Federal Election Primary

There is no federal primary.

Wages: November elections

The Supervisors proposed an increase to \$475.00.

Pre/Post Election Meetings

The Supervisors proposed an increase of \$270.00 making it \$600.00.

Training

Stayed the same

Mileage

Stayed the same

Supplies

Stayed the same

Advertising

It is not a state requirement anymore to advertise so this was removed in the past.

The Select Board was okay with the Supervisors budget as is.

Conservation Commission Budget

Gina Rescigno and Virginia Baker attended to discuss the Conservation Commission budget.

Conservation

Stayed the same

Workshops/Seminars

Stayed the same

Postage/Supplies

Stayed the same

Mileage

Stayed the same

Other/fishing derby

Stayed the same

Other Concerns:

The Conservation Commission requested to add a line to be called "Water Testing" and requested \$250.00 be put in this line for this year for testing for Spectacle Pond and other water testing that may come up.

The Select Board was okay with the Conservation Commission budget as is.

What we should pay ServPro out of

The Town received an invoice for the work completed for the mold removal. Also, a 50% deposit of the work to complete the project and replace what was removed due to the mold was required to schedule this work. The Select Board will need to decide where we want to pay this out of. Do we want to use ARPA funds if allowed or do we want to take from Disaster Management money? The entire project will be over \$25,000.000. The Select Board agreed to pay out of ARPA funds once the public hearing happens and the vote to accept the funds since the emails from NHMA and GOFERR state that this money could be used for this and explained why.

Peabody and Smith Survey

Peabody and Smith sent a survey for the Select Board to complete regarding the properties that they sold for the Town. The Select Board would like Sara to fill this out.

Meeting with Bubba

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

- There is a NH Public Works Mutual Aid workshop on Friday, October 15th in Pembroke from 8:30am-1:30pm. It is free to members. Bubba and Sara would like to attend as it goes over mutual aid, weather events, etc. Sara usually doesn't work Fridays but if the Select Board wanted her to attend this, she would either earn comp time or if they didn't want her to earn that much comp time, she could take leave early on Thursday to remove some of the time. The Select Board is okay with this and is okay with Sara taking a half day on Thursday 10/14/21.
- Paving of Smith Road is scheduled for October 21, 2021.
- River Road paving is completed, just needs shoulder gravel.
- Backhoe coming in around \$160,000.00 with broom, forks, etc. Just a heads up for warrant article. Sara will apply for a USDA grant but then we need to see if we can raise the rest of the money, use some money from the heavy equipment and raise the rest from taxation, etc. Just a few things to keep in mind.
- Bubba asked if the Select Board wanted to get an estimate on getting land leveled for a warrant article. That way we can start doing it in steps to make sure we are doing something for the land. Then the next year maybe just do the salt and sand sheds. John said we would need to keep in mind where the building is going to go. Bubba said that we would need to keep in mind the well, septic, etc. Tony said once the land is leveled it will give us a better idea.
- Bubba got estimates for the end of the roads to save the end of the roads. The estimate is \$14,300.00. The Select Board will decide if they want to do a warrant article for this.
- Bubba got an estimate for the parking lot which is \$34,920.00. The Select Board will decide if they want to do a warrant article for this.
- The basketball court estimate is around \$9,000.00. The Select Board will decide if they want to do a warrant article for this.
- Once Smith Road is done, every road in Town will have had some work done to it within the last four years.

- Bubba and Sara looked at a Capital Reserve Fund for Road paving and repairs.
- Tony said we should look at getting a trailer for when we rent machines and it can be used to haul culverts, material, etc.

Unexpended fund balance

Sara will see what this fund can be used for to see if this could this be used towards the backhoe or other items.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 6:58pm, Ron 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant