

TOWN OF GROTON
SELECT BOARD MEETING
May 18, 2021

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

Audience Members Present

John called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

MINUTE APPROVAL

John motioned to approve the Work Session Meeting minutes of May 5, 2021 as written, Ron 2nd, so voted. John motioned to approve the Non-Public Work Session Meeting minutes of May 5, 2021 as written, Ron 2nd, so voted.

John motioned to approve the Select Board Meeting minutes of May 5, 2021 as amended due to one typo, Ron 2nd, so voted.

NEW BUSINESS:

Interoffice Memo- Exemptions/Credits Updated letters per re-valuation

Every five years the Town does a re-valuation where DRA and Avitar work with the Town to make sure we are doing everything that we need to be doing and collecting the necessary documentation for current use, credits, exemptions, etc. They also do this to make sure the properties are being assessed appropriately. Due to this, every five years the Town sends out an updated residency letter for credits and exemptions and goes over any supporting documentation needed to make sure there are no changes. Sara has sent these letters out and has received some back so far. **John motioned to sign the interoffice memos for each of the exemptions/credits that Sara has received back so far, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Building Permit Map 5 Lot 134

The owner dropped off a building permit for a 10x15 mudroom for his property located on 18 Hammerhead Road. He has previously supplied the PUC and DES approvals. He has a release form on file but this was before we were sending them to the registry so Sara will let him know we need a new release form. He had submitted a building permit for this in 2016 that was approved but he didn't get to the work so since that expired, he filed for a new one. Sara will contact him to let him know that an updated release form is needed and this needs to go before the Planning Board. **John motioned to table the building permit for Map 5 Lot 134 until the Planning Board reviews it, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Building Permit Map 5 Lot 45

The owner dropped off a building permit for a 16x16 addition at his property located on 73 Beaver Pond Road. He did supply the PUC approval and DES approval. This is on a private Road and he doesn't have a release form on file so he will need one. Sara will contact him to let him know this is needed and that this has to go before the Planning Board. **John motioned to table the building permit for Map 5 Lot 45 until the Planning Board reviews it, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Building Permit Map 5 Lot 120

The owners dropped off a building permit for a 12x20 prebuilt garage/shed at their property located on 11 Sculptured Rocks Road. **John motioned to approve the building permit for Map 5 Lot 120, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Abatement- Timber Tax Map 10 Lot 42

Ruth submitted an abatement application for the timber tax that was revised for Map 10 Lot 42. Since it was corrected in a different month, the older one has to be abated in the amount of \$593.48. **John motioned to sign the abatement for timber tax for Map 10 Lot 42, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Intent to Cut Map 9 Lot 8

The logger submitted an intent for Map 9 Lot 8 for property located on Groton Hollow Road. This is about a 12-acre cut. **John motioned to sign intent to cut for Map 9 Lot 8, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Class VI Road letters

Sara drafted letters to those that have previously maintained Class VI Roads to remind them to submit their changes to the Board for approval. **John motioned to sign the Class VI Road improvements letter, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Local Septic Approval- Map 5 Lot 72

Daniel Ward dropped off a septic plan and local approval for Map 5 Lot 72 as they are making it larger. All information is correct. **John motioned to sign the local septic approval for Map 5 Lot 72, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

MS-232

The MS-232 is the Report of Appropriations Actually Voted from Town Meeting. **John motioned to sign the MS-232 and have it submitted to the Department of Revenue, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

MS-535

The auditor sent the MS-535, which is the financial report of the budget, with our suggested changes on it over today. The Select Board reviewed the MS-535 and was okay with the amounts. **John motioned to sign the MS535, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

Sara will put this on the website.

SELECT BOARD ITEMS:

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

Bill Oakley talked to Paul Hatch and they would like to update the EOP together. They will work with the Hebron Fire Chief. They believe they can do it so we wouldn't need to get the grant and hire anyone to do it for us. They wanted to make sure the Select Board approved this before moving forward with it. The Select Board approved Bill Oakley and Paul Hatch updating the EOP.

Grafton County Broadband Summary

The Select Board received an email from the Town Administrator for Campton. The Grafton County Broadband Committee has been working diligently for the past six months making significant progress on a preliminary design concept for the backbone, surveying residents on the lack of broadband coverage, creating awareness in the public for the need, engaging with broadband providers on their current services, mapping, identifying funding opportunities, investigating business models, estimating costs, among others. They are now in the process of applying for one of the many funding opportunities and are seeking letters of support from Grafton County communities and Broadband Committees. They ask that the Select Board continues their support by signing our letter of support by Thursday, May 20th. This is a form that can be done online so if the Select Board approves. The Select Board does approve and since a signature isn't needed, they asked Sara to fill this out online on behalf of the Select Board.

Town Meeting items

John said that he feels that people have a right to vote the way they want to. But to not allow people to talk about what they are voting on is uncalled for and this happened with Article 2 on the building and the bond. There was a lot of information that should have been shared but that was shut down. This garage is not for the Select Board, it is not for Bubba or any individual, it is for the town. It is a shame that more people don't come out to the Select Board meetings and the informational and public hearings that we had to get more information instead of just voting it down due to fear of taxes going up, when in fact they would go down. John said unfortunately we will be forced to take the next step on the building when it is floating down the river. John just wishes that both sides, for the building and against the building, had a chance to talk about it. Tony mentioned that some people got a letter about the building before Town Meeting and whoever put it out didn't sign it and the letter was not factual. There were a lot of non-truths in that letter. Ann wanted to add that the information that comes from anywhere else but the meetings is only half truths. The minutes are online so even if people cannot make it to the actual meeting, they can educate themselves and read the minutes later online and can even access this from their smart phones

With all of the confusion and side conversations at Town Meeting, the last time Article 5 was revisited there was a request to amend the article. The motion to amend the article passed but then the amendment wasn't voted. Someone brought this up after the meeting and we had Ruth listen to the minutes to be sure. We reached out to DRA and to the attorney and since the amended article was not voted on the article fails which means we cannot put any money into the Disaster Relief or Assessing Capital Reserve Funds this year. Ruth asked if she understood that we could do a special town meeting. Sara explained that we did reach out to see what we could do and the attorney did say that we could request a special town meeting for these funds but this costs money and has to go to the courts to see if they consider this an emergency and we are not sure if they would. The Select Board decided against it because of the costs and said that we will put more money into these funds next year.

Ruth said that for what it is worth she thanks everyone for the hard work that they put into it and is devastated that the building didn't go through.

DEPARTMENT ITEMS:

Highway Department

Bubba went over the following:

- They putting the bunting and the flags up this week at the Town House so it is all set for Memorial Day.
- They put the plywood down on the bridge that leads to the pond to make it safe for people to walk over for the upcoming fishing derby. Tony will go look at it too.
- They mowed over at the pond and plan on doing it again before the fishing derby.

Police Department

Chief said he has taken more complaints for catalytic converters being taken out of the vehicles, one on River Road and one on North Groton Road. This is a problem across the state not just here so people should be aware of this.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Conservation Commission

At the Conservation Commission meeting, they worked on everything for the Fishing Derby. They found all the items they need. The Flyers are ready and Slim will be picking them up. Sara asked for him to bring her a copy to put online, on Groton NH Events Facebook page and in house. Ruth will put it in her article as well.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:

1214 North Groton Road

Ann asked if DES did an inspection at 1214 North Groton Road. It was explained that DES did go out and found no evidence of any chemical spills. There was a water leak that they found that the Health Officer went and looked at but the water is running outside and is clean water and not in the house. The Select Board is also working with the attorney on another court order since the Town cleaned up the property and he didn't maintain the clean-up. This will hopefully allow the Town to clean it up again and to clean up moving forward as needed. Chief Bagan added that it appears that no one has been there for a while and there are no kids living there anymore.

Newspaper Column

Ruth said that if anyone wants to take over the newspaper column that she currently does to let her know.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 7:40pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant