

TOWN OF GROTON
SELECT BOARD MEETING
November 2, 2021

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

Audience Members Present

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

MINUTE APPROVAL

John motioned to approve the Non-Public Work Session Meeting minutes of October 19, 2021 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted. Ron abstained.

John motioned to approve the Work Session Meeting minutes of October 19, 2021 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted. Ron abstained.

John motioned to approve the Select Board Meeting minutes of October 19, 2021 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted. Ron abstained.

NEW BUSINESS:

2021 Equalization Municipal Assessment Data Certificate

The Department of Revenue Administration sent in the yearly equalization municipal assessment data certificate to be signed by the Select Board. The Equalization Ratio is where the assessments fall during the year and should reflect market value as close as possible to 100%. The State will review the information submitted, which will be reviewed by the State Department of Revenue. The Certificate is what the Town needs to submit to release the information to the State. Avitar does the work for us, sends us the form and once we send it back, they release the information to the Department of Revenue. The preliminary analysis indicates a median sale to assessment ration of 98.7%. **John motioned to sign the 2021 Equalization Municipal Assessment Data Certificate, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

MS-60W

This is a waiver request for the locally elected audit that allows towns, under population of 700, to request permission to complete sections 1 and 2 only for the audit. **John motioned to sign the MS-60W, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Building Permit Map 6 Lot 2

The owner submitted a building permit for their property located on 39 Orchard Hill Lane for a 480 square foot shed. This is on a private road so this permit did go before the Planning Board. The Planning Board reviewed the permit, the deed and any plans we had on file. They are okay with the Select Board approving the permit. He did submit the release of municipal liability form as well. John mentioned that the owner must have an approved outhouse before the Select Board can approve the permit. **John motioned to table the building permit for Map 6 Lot 2 until the owner brings in something showing that the outhouse follows state guidelines, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Local Septic Approval- Map 6 Lot 63-5

Matt Barnard dropped off a septic plan and local approval for Map 6 Lot 63-5. This is the same one that the Select Board reviewed at the last meeting but the owner decided to go with a 4 bedroom home instead of 3 bedrooms. All information is correct. **John motioned to sign the local septic approval for Map 6 Lot 63-5, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Intent to Cut- Map 5 Lot 44

The logger submitted an intent for Map 5 Lot 44 for property located on Snoburk Lane. This is about a 8- acre cut. No bond is needed. **John motioned to sign intent to cut for Map 5 Lot 44, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Avitar 2022 Terra Mapping Agreement

Avitar sent in the Terra Mapping Services Agreement. This is sent in yearly. The Town does the 1 year for \$1,780.00 and it did increase this year by \$120.00 but covers everything it did in the past. Sara asked if they wanted to sign this agreement or wait until the Assessing RFPs come in just in case, we change companies for Assessing that offers mapping as well. The RFP's will be on the December 7, 2021 agenda. **John motioned to table the 2022 Avitar Terra Mapping Services Agreement, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

SELECT BOARD ITEMS:

Tax Rate information

John shared that they have a preliminary tax rate and it is a lot lower than last year for a couple of reasons. The first is that the Towns valuation came back and is much higher than it was in the past which helps lower the tax rate. Also, last year at the Town Meeting due to the debacle over the Town Garage, the Town presented a much lower budget and some warrant articles were not voted on correctly so money wasn't put into the disaster relief fund and other capital reserve funds. In the past we had a lot of warrant articles for road projects, grant matches, etc. which we didn't have this year. Also, the county tax, local school and state school are all lower this year. We are looking at around \$9.00 but this isn't final yet. This should be final next week. Sara mentioned even if we did the building it would have only brought this up another \$1.00 -\$1.50 which would still have been a lower tax rate. Slim asked if this was just the Towns portion and not the school. It was explained that the \$9.00 includes everything, school, county, town, etc. Sara explained that the school is \$4.07. Sara said that if we would have run the same numbers with last year's valuation, we were between \$11.00-\$12.00 so the valuation going up helped it by a few dollars alone. Sara gave a break down that the preliminary rate has the county at \$2.03, the local school at \$4.07, the State School at \$2.32 and the Town at \$0.55, making the total \$8.97 but this isn't final yet. John mentioned to keep in mind that everyone's taxes with what they are paying may not be lower because most everyone's property value went up so even though the tax rate went down it will average out and there may be a few hundred-dollar savings right now. Sara explained that when the first tax bill goes out, we do not know the tax rate so they take half of the prior year so the first tax bill was based at \$9.08. The second bill will make up for the difference needed after that. There should be a savings overall. Tony said that we still would have been raising less money with the building than we had in the past for projects.

DEPARTMENT ITEMS:

Highway Department

Bubba went over the following

- They got the winter sand covered.
- Smith Road received the top coat on Thursday October 21, 2021.
- There is tree trimming taking place on River Road.

Police

Chief Bagan went over the following:

- Chief moved the radar signs.
- Halloween was uneventful and there wasn't a big turnout. He did give out some candy while he was patrolling but that was before the trick or treating.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:

Property Sale

Slim said the property on Edgar Albert Road sold for 1.1 million dollars. It was mentioned that this is the property on Edgar Albert Road that is supposedly 1200 acres. It appears a forester company bought it.

Planning Board minutes

A resident brought up a concern that the Planning Board minutes haven't been updated online. Sara hasn't received any in a few months but will email them to request them. John said that minutes are being taken and they are approving them at the monthly minutes.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 7:15pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant