

Town of Groton  
Select Board Work Session Minutes  
September 20, 2022

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

**John called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.**

***Meeting with Carol Miller on Broadband***

Carol introduced Bryan from Consolidated Communications who was in attendance to speak to the Select Board regarding broadband in Town. He gave a background of who he is and what he does. Over the past year they have been working with Towns to find ways to bring fiber internet to the Towns. He works with Towns to see about funding such as grants, bonds, etc. He had a presentation that he went through. Fidium is a new product which he went over, he went over fiber internet plans, extenders, affordability rates, etc. They have partnered with 23 towns, which is 32,591 customers. The average project time is 4 months. They recently applied for a 450 million grant which they should know if they got it this week. There was a map to show current coverage and areas that would qualify for grants. Groton is an underserved area and should qualify for grants. There is another grant package coming up in the next few months but they haven't seen final rules for that.

John asked if individuals are eligible for grant money or just the Towns. Bryan said it wouldn't be that they would apply individually, it would be covered in the larger grant. They wouldn't expect individuals to pay for this program and they wouldn't charge installation unless it is a very long driveway. The individuals would just have to pay for a monthly charge once they have the service.

Carol stated the presentation was good and showed that Groton is underserved. There were not other questions or concerns for Bryan so everyone thanked Bryan for his time and he left the meeting.

Carol mentioned that the \$50 million dollar grant he mentioned was the same one that NHEC applied for. They are supposed to be announcing this in a few days. Regardless of the grant, NHEC is still going to deploy. We will wait to hear from them.

Carol mentioned that she sent over the Grafton County initiative. This was supposed to be sent to the Town but we hadn't received it so she tracked it down for Groton and sent it over. Sara had printed a copy for each of the Selectmen and emailed it to them prior to the meeting. Carol said that she was very surprised by the cost in that for Groton which was almost 5 million. John asked where this money comes from to pay for this. She said there is no money right now. Some used grants such as ARPA money, NBRC, and other grants. The County used some ARPA funds. Sara confirmed that this is separate then what NHEC is trying to do and this is just high level and doesn't take NHEC's plans into consideration. Carol confirmed the initiative is what it would cost the Town without any assistance from anyone else.

John asked why NHEC or any other company would they put money into our community when we are so small and they wouldn't get their money back because it is not a large customer base. Carol said that the reason for these programs is to look at underserved areas, which we are, so we would qualify and NHEC said they would already deploy to all of their customers and they serve all of Groton.

NHEC will be our best option but we need to look into all options and she will continue to do so. She would normally ask more providers to come but she thinks that we should wait and see what happens with NHEC and this grant. She will let us know after Friday if NHEC got the grant or who did.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 4, 2022 at 6:00pm.

### ***Memo from Sara***

Sara submitted a memo with a few days that she needs to leave early for appointments. The Select Board approved the time off.

### ***Junkyard letter***

The junkyard letter that we sent certified came back as unclaimed. Sara did reach out to Audrey and she said since the other one hasn't come back then we should be covered but if Chief is willing to deliver it then we could do that. The Select Board would like to ask Chief to deliver this just in case he didn't get the other letter for some reason. Sara will ask Chief.

### ***Transfer Station Applicant***

Sara received an application for the Transfer Station attendant this afternoon. This is the only one we have received. The Select Board said that even though it is the only one we have received we should still interview him. They asked Sara to touch base with Norm. Sara will talk to Norm tomorrow and see what works for him to set up an interview.

### ***Email from NLRA***

Sara received an email from Rebecca at NLRA with some plans on Atwell Brook and she asked for feedback by the end of the week. Sara forwarded the email to the Select Board and put in the review folder. It is a lot of information and since an engineer is working on the Select Board is good with the plans but would like to know who will fund the project. Sara will email Rebecca.

### ***School Meeting***

John said that they are trying to set up another school meeting for September 27, 2022 at 6pm in library at middle school. However, John and another person are not able to attend that day so they are trying to change it. They feel that all of the original members of this committee should be there, especially if they are going to vote. They are trying to make it so over 4 years they will gradually add in the town paying based on valuation. John said that they are also looking at options to pulling out of SAU4. It may not save money but it could help with other concerns. John will mention this during the Select Board meeting.

### ***Meeting with Bubba***

Bubba mentioned that the only item he wants to discuss is the driveway on North Groton. Bubba mentioned that we sent them a letter, then emailed and Bubba has most recently talked to them. He told them that he would like to see  $\frac{3}{4}$  or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  stone to create berms to slow water down. He thought he was clear with what should be done but then the owner put boulders up, not stone. Bubba said maybe they didn't understand what he was asking. John said that we should send a letter detailing what needs to be done. **John motioned to come in and sign the letter when it is ready, Tony 2<sup>nd</sup>, so voted.** Tony told Bubba to let him know when he has time and they can go look at it together. Once they look at it, Sara will work with Tony and Bubba to draft a letter of what is needed. Tony said they can also take pictures. John said the letter should state that the Town can meet with them, if they would like, to show what we are looking for.

***Nail concern***

As of now, there has not been any recent complaints. John will mention the Groton NH Community Events Facebook page at the Select Board meeting and that this isn't always factual and the Town doesn't monitor this so it is not a way to communicate issues with the Select Board.

Sara mentioned that Dave Switaj emailed and asked for access to cameras. Sara emailed him back that either herself, Norm or an attendant could let him in and to let her know when he is planning on coming. She also gave him the hours the Transfer Station is open so he could go during that time if preferred. She did not hear back from him so she is not aware if he went or not.

***Next meeting 10/4/22***

The next meeting is October 4, 2022 and Ron will not be here. It is the first meeting on budgets. John and Tony will both be here.

**Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 6:45pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Smith  
Administrative Assistant