

TOWN OF GROTON
SELECT BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
June 14, 2022

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

Audience Members Present

PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCUSS THE PURCHASE OF A LONG REACH MOWING TRACTOR

John motioned to open the public hearing at 7:00pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

John explained that this meeting is to discuss the purchase of a long reach mowing tractor. Each year the Town rents one and the costs continue to rise on the rentals. Bubba was made aware of a gentleman that used to rent these that is now selling his equipment. There is a long reach mowing tractor for \$24,500.00. To rent one now would cost about \$5,400.00, without transportation, just for a week and then we can only use it during that week, dependent on weather, dependent on if anything else is going on that week and other variables can always come into play. If we owned one, we could use it whenever we wanted, could get more than one road done a year and it has other benefits.

The Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund has \$67,560.42 in it right now. This is a fund that was created to provide the Town with money to purchase heavy equipment as needed for the Highway Department and the Selectmen can expend from this fund. The Town already voted to use \$50,000.00 of that towards the backhoe, which leaves \$17,560.42. The Select Board would like to take \$17,000.00 of this so that we still have some money in there. Then the difference of \$7,500.00 can come out of the highway budget line, tools and equipment purchases, where they already budgeted \$5,400.00 for the mowing but won't need to rent this if we buy this machine.

Sherry asked how many road sides we would do. Bubba explained that the entire town should be mowed every year but we can't do every road when we rent the mower, we have to pick roads and depending on weather we do what we can. The part that is mowed is the side of the roads and ditching. She asked what roads are the Town Roads because she knows that North Groton Road is not. Bubba explained that North Groton Road is from Halls Brook to 118, Sculptured Rocks Road, River Road, Smith Road, Edgar Albert Road, North Fletcher Road, Portions of Bailey Hill Road, portions of Old Rumney Road, portion of Blanchette Lane, Province Road and Spectacle Pond Road are all roads that the Town maintains.

John said that when we had all of those storms and experienced damage to the road, what he learned was that one of the biggest causes for water to run over the road and cause damage is when the roads haven't been ditched. This is very important maintenance to protect our roads. Sara agreed that this is what they stressed during all the meetings with FEMA and DES that one of the biggest causes is not staying on top of the mowing and ditching which causes the water to run where it shouldn't which causes wash outs and road damage.

Tony said mowing is a maintenance item and is one of the most important things. When he worked for DOT for 33 years when they run out of money that is one of the first things they do. When brush grows in it is very hard to take it out. It is better to maintain every road, every year but with a rental we were not able to. Using a rental in a 40-hour week you would be lucky to get North Groton Road done. It is not just one pass; you have to keep making passes back and forth so if we own the mower, it will save us money in the long run. You are looking at about \$7,000 a week with transportation and we are not getting all of the roads done. If we own it, we will get all of our roads done every year.

Jim said that his road has been done twice since they have lived here and it grows back big and hard to take care. It grows in thick. Bubba said that at times it has been so long that it makes it harder to cut and then if it gets to a certain size, he cannot cut it without contacting the property owner.

Tony said that the reason they are doing this is that an instructor for UNH said that Towns are buying more because it costs so much to rent them and they are limited how much time they have when it's rented to get the work done. There is also only about one company we can rent from so the need is there so they continue to increase the cost. He said that it is really hard to mow in the rain because you can't see what you are doing so if you rent it for a week and it rains most of the week you are out that money and didn't get the work done. Bubba said that when you rent it you get it on Monday and you only have it until Friday at noon time. With driving it out to where you are working, the weather and other things that come up you are never getting the actual 40 hours of mowing.

Tony said this is more cost effective to buy it. He said it is a 2003 but is in decent shape. This is used and will need repairs over time because it is used. Bubba said they are \$120,000 brand new. The cost to rent has already gone up and will continue to go up.

Slim asked how many hours are on this. Bubba said there are 3600 hours on this. Tony said that is not a lot of hours.

Tony said this mower has been sitting for a little while because people haven't been renting it. This is coming from a rental company, Owens rentals that everyone rents from even the state but he is giving it up and selling his equipment.

Tony said this is the last one they have. They just found out tonight that he is selling the rest to someone else but they knew the Town was interested in this. Tony said that Bubba and him went and looked at it 3 weeks ago.

John said when this came up three weeks ago, he wanted to discuss this with the Town first and wanted to have a public hearing so the Town was aware of this before they made a decision. We had to wait until we could post the meeting and give the proper notice of the meeting. We thought he may sell it to someone else since we had to wait but Bubba called him again today and they said that someone else was looking to buy it and they could have sold it to someone else but were holding off for town until we had this meeting.

Shery said this should last our lifetime. Tony said it easily will. John said that since Bubba has taken over, he really takes care of the equipment and the garage. Everything is maintained so it should last a considerable amount of time. John said that coming from a rental place helps too because most rental places maintain their equipment since this is how they make their money. Tony said especially mowers because you only have about a five-month period that you can rent them due to the weather. Bubba said that is why it is so expensive since they cannot get a full year rental out of it so they are trying to make all of their money during the few months they can.

Tony said Rumney just bought one for the same exact reasons. Sherry said they have more roads. Tony said they do but we also have roads that we have to maintain. You have to do both sides of the road and cannot just go over it once. It is a lot of work.

John stated that it is a 2003 TS-1100 New Holland with Tiger Boom long reach mower. Tony said the boom reaches out about 25-30 feet. It reaches out so you don't tear up the banks. Bubba showed a picture of the tractor and the arm. Slim asked if it was just the attachment, he thought our tractor we have would be pulling it. Bubba and Tony explained it is the entire piece of equipment. It is the tractor with the arm on it with the

mower with a four-foot mowing that reaches out so that you can mow behind guardrails and everything. Bubba said not this is the entire tractor with mower.

John asked if there were any more questions and there were not. **John motioned to move forward with the purchase of the 2003 TS-1100 New Holland mower, to transfer \$17,000 from the Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund and for Sara to cut the check on Thursday for the Select Board to sign, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

John motioned to close the public hearing at 7:20pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:

Next school meeting

Ann asked when the next school formula meeting is scheduled for. John said it is scheduled for July 13, 2022 at 6:00 pm at the Newfound Memorial Middle School. He said it is important to attend this meeting because there may be some type of voted.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 7:20pm, Ron 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant