

Town of Groton
Select Board Work Session Minutes
January 31, 2023

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

John called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Rumney- Fire/EMS Contracts 2022-2023

The Fire Contract increased by \$2,359.35 making it \$9,820.25. The EMS Contract decreased by \$372.08 making it \$1,073.13. This the contract but doesn't include the additional charges for the pay hourly for those that respond to the calls. We budgeted \$15,000.00 so we should still be all set for the calls. **John motioned to sign the Rumney Fire and Emergency Services Agreements, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Sara mentioned that the email from Joe from Rumney stated *"The Board of Selectmen wanted to share that the purchase of a replacement Fire Truck is on the 2023 Rumney Warrant. If this article passes the Board would like to arrange a meeting with the Groton Board of Selectmen to discuss that shared depreciation payment on a new truck. If you have any questions, please let me know."*

The Select Board agreed that we will wait and see if it passes and then move forward with the meeting if needed.

Agreement for MS-535

The Town received the agreement from Plodzik & Sanderson, P.A. for the MS-535. The fees are the same as last year so it still falls within what we budgeted for. **John motioned to sign the agreement for the MS-535, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Budget Items

The 1st Public Hearing on the budget is next Tuesday, February 7, 2023 so the Select Board went over a few things. Sara put together the final budgets with the information from the last meeting and final 2022 YTD totals.

A few things to consider:

- In the November 1, 2022 work session minutes, we had written that Mid State requested an increase to \$1,050.00 which the Select Board didn't approve. It was actually Lakes Region Mental Health Center that requested the increase not Mid State Health. The Select Board agreed that we still do not want to increase this line this year.
- Norm came to Sara this week concerned about the Casella increases. He said it is looking like 65% increase which would make the budget go up \$34,000.00. This seems like a huge jump. Our contract is up with them in July anyway so we may not have them for the full year. We also have a meeting with them on 2/21/23 so we can discuss it with them but that is after the budget hearing. Sara will reach out to Casella to see if this 65% increase is correct and to get an idea what our costs for a year will be. We may have to change this before the budget hearing.

Warrant Articles

Sara updated the warrant articles based on the discussion at the last few meetings. She presented the Select Board with a new draft which also included the zoning ballot wording that the Planning Board

sent her. The Select Board was good with the warrant as written. They said they will get an idea at the public hearing if they should keep the bond wording or just try to raise it all in one year. Once we see what the people at the meeting think, we can change it if needed but if we move forward with the bond we need to have these public hearings as they are required. They also discussed that if the building doesn't pass this year, they will need to amend the warrant article on the Capital Reserve Funds and put money into the Public Works Capital Reserve Fund.

The Select Board went over each article and discussed if they recommend it or not.

John motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) and (b) at 6:00pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

John motioned to return to public session at 6:45pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

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

Report of cut/Timber Tax 22-193-04-T

The Town received a report of cut from the owner of Map 1 Lots 16 & 21 for a cut of about 25 acres. Sara sent this out to the Forester for review and for the assessment. The amount of the tax is \$966.42.

John motioned to sign the yield certificate for Map 1 Lots 16&21, Tony 2nd, so voted.

Province Road- email from attorney

Sara had reached out to the attorney to see what our options are for Province Road. She emailed back stating the following:

"I would therefore recommend that we write a letter to the Dorchester BOS and the residents who live on the road telling them that they do not have permission to perform any work on the road, including plowing, and that if they continue to do so, we will seek an injunction to require them to stop. You can't gate the road, because you can't deny people access to their properties. You can't prohibit wheeled vehicles from the road, though you could establish maximum weight limits under RSA 231:191 (but even that is subject to many exceptions). You can put up more signs, but clearly that's not working. Please let me know if you'd like me to draft a letter"

The Select Board agreed that we should start with the letter. Sara will reach out to the attorney and let her know.

Jonathan Picard- Pemi Baker TV email

Jonathan Picard of Pemi-Baker TV emailed to see if the Select Board are interested in meeting with him regarding something he wanted to bring to the Groton Selectboard. He sent an email previously that was in the review folder about something called Member Communities. He later realized it might not be the right time to bring this idea up with all the annual town meetings coming up. That being said, he was hoping to maybe meet with the board, either in person or over the phone, to discuss this topic to see if it is something that should be brought to the board's attention now or after town meetings. His schedule is very open, so he would be ok to meet with you whenever it is convenient for the board.

The Select Board agreed that we should email him back for more information. If he is looking to record or air our meetings we are not interested.

Email from Deb

Deb Johnson sent an email last week with her concerns about how much she has to do as the Chair with conducting the meetings, take minutes, abutter notifications, publications and other items that should be secretarial things. The Planning Board doesn't have a secretary and the Select Board did post looking for a minute taker for all committees but Deb feels the stipend is way too low. She wasn't sure if she was going to run again or not but then she sent an email this week that she is going to run but isn't sure how long she will last. Also at the Planning Board meeting last week, Sara had asked Deb if she wanted her to order a digital recorder which would make it easier to record the meetings and do the minutes later. Deb did email back that Sara should order one, which she did.

The Select Board said that we had no one reach out interested in taking minutes and if it is because the Stipend is too low, they should say something. No one has even done the job or inquired on how many meetings it would be to know if that is too low or not. Sara said it is currently listed as a Stipend for \$1,200.00 a year, which is \$100.00 a month. Right now the only committee/board that meets consistently besides the Select Board is the Planning Board which meets once a month. The Conservation Commission, the Zoning Board and other committees have only been meeting as needed. When they do meet, they have someone on the committee that takes the minutes. Sara would continue to do the minutes for the Select Board meeting so the minute taker would really only be working once a month for the most part. If someone was hired and it was more than that then the Select Board could decide if this was too low at that time.

923 North Groton Road- email from Deb

The Select Board has been looking into the RV at 923 North Groton Road. They have reached out to the Planning Board for their thoughts, have reached out to NHMA and have discussed this many times.

There are different ways this could be looked and many different things that come in to play. The current zoning does state that no placement of RV's can occur anywhere except District C, which would mean currently they are not allowed in Districts A and B which is where his property is. However, he did currently have an RV on the property before the zoning was passed. After much review, the Select Board agreed that since he had an RV on this property before any zoning was passed and replaced it with an RV that he will be considered grandfathered. He said that he did reach out to the Town when he wanted to remove the old one and put a new one in and was told he could. There were no timelines given to him at that time. Also, since we currently do not require building permits for RVs, we do not need one for this. Sara will reach out and let the owner know and will also make it clear that RVs are not for living in year-round.

160 Halls Brook Road- email from Deb

The Planning Board emailed to ask the Select Board to discuss the RV at 160 Halls Brook Road. Apparently, it arrived around the second quarter in 2022 but there was no pre-existing use and is clearly placed in a district that does not allow RV's.

The Select Board agreed that we send a letter stating that they live in a district that does not allow RVs per the current zoning ordinance, that federal laws say you cannot live in a RV/camper year-round, and ask what their intent for the RV is.

1642 North Groton Road

There has also been some concern regarding the RV at 1642 North Groton Road. The Select Board agreed that we should send a letter stating the same thing as 160 Halls Brook stating that they live in a

district that does not allow RVs per the current zoning ordinance, that federal laws say you cannot live in a RV/camper year-round, and ask what their intent for the RV is.

Sara will have the letters for both addresses ready for the Select Board to sign on Tuesday when they sign checks.

Letter from Mourning Dove Holdings

Mourning Dove Holdings sent a letter requesting to purchase Map 2 Lot 123. We already have an agreement with an abutter regarding this property that was signed in April of 2022 allowing him 24 months to buy this and he already put down a deposit. We worked with the attorney on this agreement.

The Select Board said that we should reach out to the abutter that we have the agreement with to see if he is still interested. If he is still interested, Sara will draft a letter to Mourning Dove stating that it is under agreement and if anything changes, we can let him know. Sara will have this letter ready for the Select Board to sign at the next meeting.

Town Report update

Sara is still waiting on the Planning Boards write up for the Town Report. We also need to wait until we finalize the budget and warrant articles. Once this is done, she will have a draft of the Town report for Select Board to review. She should have a draft with the draft budget and warrant articles by the end of this week. After the Public Hearing she may have to change out the budget and warrant articles depending on if any changes are made and will have to run the MS-636 for the Town report based on that. Then she will be able to send the Town Report to the printers. The printers will send a proof at that time for us to review and approve.

Cameras

The cameras in the Town House have not been working consistently. They are older cameras. Dave Switaj was pricing them out and thinks he can get all four for \$120.00. The Select Board said that if he can get them for that price, they are okay with ordering them.

Sara also mentioned that her monitor doesn't have a camera or speaker and she needs this for a lot of zoom meetings. She pulls out the laptop to use that right now but it can be a pain when she has to quickly set up for one. She priced monitors with cameras and speakers and they are around \$500.00 so she doesn't want to do that because her monitor is fine. Dave said he can get a camera with speaker to attach to her existing monitor and they are around \$40.00. The Select Board agreed that Sara should order one of those.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 6:40pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant