

TOWN OF GROTON
PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING
March 7, 2023

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

Audience Members Present

John called the Public Hearing on the Proposed Public Works Building to order at 7:00pm.

John said that he will read the warrant article as written because it sums everything up and then he will open it up to questions. He read the article as follows:

ARTICLE 3: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **six hundred seventy nine thousand dollars (\$679,000)** to design and construct a new Department of Public Works building, with **one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000)** to come from the unassigned fund balance; **two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000)** to come from a USDA Rural Development grant; and to authorize the withdrawal of **one hundred sixty thousand dollars (\$160,000)** from the Public Works Capital Reserve Fund; with the remainder of **one hundred sixty nine thousand dollars (\$169,000)** to be raised from taxation. (Majority vote required).

John mentioned that if we do not approve the building this year, we will lose the grant. This does include the salt shed but not the sand shed so we will try to get a grant for the sand shed to drive that cost down as well. If all warrant articles pass and the operational budget goes through as it is, the overall budget will only be \$6,272 higher than last year and that would include getting a building.

Miles confirmed this mean no bond. John said that is correct. Miles also confirmed that this would be just a simple majority vote then. John said that is correct.

John said this way it will be done in one year so we do not have to pay for it over the next three years. Tony said last year the Town put \$100,000 into the Public Works Capital Reserve Fund so this year we are only asking for \$69,000 more than that. Tony said that if it doesn't get approved this year then we won't see a building for a very long time and we will lose the grant. John said that this will affect other grants as well.

A resident asked what the building looks like. Tony went over the plans and explained it is 4 bays. John mentioned it is similar to the building that went up in Hebron near the Fire Department. Tony also mentioned that there is also a breakdown of costs. This includes the building, the offices, doors, windows, concrete, etc.

Miles asked if since the last public hearing if the Select Board touched base with the engineers. John said yes, we did. The reviewed everything and these updated costs are from them. They did increase it by a little we put this by the engineer but not that much. At the last meeting we had the bond as an option in case the engineers came in with a higher price but it was only a small increase which is why the Select Board agreed to move forward without the bond. Tony said that if it increased by \$200,000 then we would have done the bond but since the price was close it was agreed to not do a bond. They increased it to \$679,000 which means we only have to raise \$169,000 from taxation which he thinks we can handle. Tony said again with all warrant articles it is only \$6,242 more than last year which is very close to level funding.

Slim confirmed again that this is with no bond since the last meeting there were two options, one for the bond and one without. John explained that we had the option in case the costs went up a lot but it didn't increase by that much so they decided not to do the bond.

Deb Johnson asked if it is a prefab building or is it going to be built on site. Tony said it will be built on site. Deb also asked if we are only getting the shell and walls with insulation and nothing else. John said this is for a complete functioning building. Tony said this is the complete functioning building with the salt shed.

Sherry said that the company that put the building up in Hebron were very good. They put in long hours to get the building up quickly.

Tony mentioned that Eric Law from USDA was supposed to be here tonight so he must be running late. John said that he was going to come to explain to the Town that this is the last chance for that grant. Also, on the grant community, once you are turned down for a grant, they do not look favorably on the Town for other grants going forward. Not only would it hurt the Town to lose this grant but it would also hurt us for grants going forward. Tony said last year we didn't get the grant for the backhoe because it was going to be stored in the flood zone. However, since we didn't get that this year there is an opportunity for a USDA grant for the sand shed.

Jeremy Elder asked what the time frame for taking occupancy looks like for this. John said too early to say that. We have to first see how it is voted on at Town Meeting. If it is voted in favor of, then we will move forward with the bidding and the process will start at that point. Tony said that the grant company would like to see it up within a year but they will work with us if needed. He said the site work, concrete, and building should be done this summer but do not know how long things like electrical and other things will take.

There were no other questions or comments on the building.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to close the public hearing on the Proposed Public Works Building at 7:11pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant