

Town of Groton
Select Board Work Session Minutes
July 25, 2023

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

Carol Miller met with the Select Board to provide an update for the NHEC broadband and to go over the following:

1. Discussion on utilizing NHEC Connection: Carol mentioned that there is a new program manager named Jonathan Nelson and a new marking manager named Peter Glenshaw. The Select Board agreed that we would want to do an open house or meet and greet in Groton where they come and do a presentation and then we can set up a table in the other room for residents to be able to ask questions, etc. Carol will reach out to see about scheduling a meet and greet for September 19th at 7pm. She will also ask if they have posters or flyers to advertise the meet and greet that we can hand out. Carol also said that they are right on schedule in Groton and have been doing about 20 miles a week for the installation of the lines. They are scheduled to finish in Groton this summer and have it available to Groton residents in the early fall. Residents can sign up online if they are interested by going to the website <https://nhbroadband.com>. This site also has pricing listed,
2. ACP Program information: They are offering an affordable connectivity program (ACP) for eligible residents if they are elderly, families with children, etc. that reach the income and poverty guidelines. This offers a \$30 subsidy. This information can also be found at the website above and there is a link for assistance programs which is where this is listed.
3. Other: They are also offering a lifeline program which is another assistance program for those that get SNAP, military, etc. This is not as big of a savings but this can also be found at the website above and there is a link for assistance programs which is where this is listed.

There was nothing else to discuss and the Select Board did not have any further questions. The next meeting is scheduled for August 22, 2023 at 6pm.

Site Visits- Office Closings

Sara mentioned that her and Bubba will be doing site visits with FEMA on Thursday 7/27/23 beginning at 9am so the office will be closed beginning at 830am. They have it scheduled for the entire day. It may not take that long but Sara will post the office as closed to be safe and if it doesn't take that long she will be back in the office once it is over.

Also, Sara, Bubba and Fred will be doing site visits for the road repair projects from the December 2022 storm damages on Tuesday, August 1, 2023 beginning at 9am. We have to visit four roads and answer questions so we are not sure how long this will take. Sara posted the office as closed for the day and if it doesn't take that long she will be back in the office once it is over.

Email from Interim Superintendent

The new superintendent sent an email to the Select Board to see if they would like to meet with him. Sara asked the Select Board if they wanted to set up a meeting. Sara will see if he can come out for one of the August meetings. She will send him the dates and see which date works best for him to come at 7:00pm.

Saras position

The Select Board asked Sara to ask the attorney if they can change her title since she is appointed or if that has to go before the Town at Town Meeting. The attorney said that the Selectmen can make that change on their own because neither is a statutory position. The Select Board agreed that we should wait until next year since we do not have the money in the budget. However, we should start looking into the process now.

Office Assistant Position

The Select Board asked Sara to reach out to the attorney regarding an office assistant and other questions regarding the Town Clerk and Deputy positions. The attorney responded with the following:

“What is being proposed here is essentially that the town hire an office assistant who will assist not just the town clerk, but also you to the extent you need that. This is absolutely fine, though this person cannot perform “town clerk” duties—she could only perform administrative duties (I’m not sure if the state would allow her to process car registrations).

The selectmen can establish this position on their own if they have money in the budget somewhere. I’m sure there’s an “administration” line in the budget which you can use for this purpose, and the selectmen can move money to that line from elsewhere in the budget, including from the deputy line if you don’t need it for a deputy. If you don’t enough “extra” money in this year’s budget to fund this position, you’ll need to wait until next year and put it either in the budget or include it as a separate warrant article.

The town clerk must be elected.”

It was agreed that this would have to wait until next year and see if this is still needed. It was agreed to post the deputy position again. We should post it on the windows, website, etc. The Select Board agreed we should post the position at \$17/hr. for 15 hours a week. Sara reminded the Select Board that it needs to be a resident.

The Select Board called Ruth in and explained that instead of doing an office assistant they would like to look into finding a deputy again. They asked Ruth to create a posting to put on her window that states the open position, the hourly rate of \$17/hr. for 15 hours a week and that it needs to be a resident. When she creates this posting, she will give Sara a copy to put on her window and one for the Transfer Station to post there. Sara will also post this information online.

Update on Driveway on Sculptured Rocks Road

The owner emailed regarding the letter and driveway permit that he received for his property on Sculptured Rocks Road. He wrote to confirm the receipt of our letter regarding the driveway permit. He apologized for not having filled one out earlier, the driveway is temporary and they did not know that they would need a permit. He plans on being out of the country until mid-month and will try to get the permit filled out by end of August. He wanted to know if that timeline would work for the town.

The Select Board is fine with that time frame. Sara will email him back to let him know.

Junky Property concern

Joe Driscoll from our attorney’s office called to discuss the property that has been a junky property. We did receive a check for \$5,000.00 which covers the cost of clean-up and some attorney fees. It does not cover the entire amount that was list on the court order, but that amount included the daily charge of \$50 per day since they hadn’t paid anything. The attorney wants to know since that tenant has moved out and there hasn’t been any more issues if we want to put this to bed since we got \$5,000.00 and the property is clean or if we want to move forward. He doesn’t know that the full amount would be granted anyway and the town may not get the costs given back to us if we move forward. The Town will also accrue more attorney fees and other charges due to that.

The Select Board agreed that we should put this to bed and not go after them for more money as long as the property stays clean. Sara will let the attorney know.

1047 North Groton Road

The owners of 1047 North Groton Road did submit the Map from the State that shows the existing driveway at this property. The Select Board reviewed it and Sara has filed it in their property file. The Select Board agreed this is sufficient so we are all set to close out this concern.

HB 349 Update

John had asked Sara to put the information on HB 349 on Town Letterhead for the Select Board to review and make changes if needed. Sara did copy this over which goes over the update on HB 349 and the next steps. The Select Board are okay with it as written and will go over this at the Select Board meeting. Sara will put this information on the website.

Motorola

We received an email from Motorola offering video security and access information. The Select Board agreed that we are all set with what we have for now. Sara will email back to let them know.

Compactor Update

Sara had provided the Select Board with an update yesterday that the compactor was down. They had to remove the motor and it will take a few weeks until they can get the parts. They are going to bring us extra containers.

After that, Norm sent an update stating that we will have to replace the compactor as parts are not available due to the age of the equipment. Tony had asked Casella at our meeting if we would have to replace it and they said no but it may take longer to get parts. Sara will reach back out to Casella to see if they know of any issues. She will also reach out to Griffin Roberge to see if he knows of any grants to run the three phase power to the Transfer Station. The other idea is the Clean Energy Link to see if there was anything they could do.

Building work

Sara has not heard back from Charlie Coursey and asked Ron if he received a quote from the guy he was going to have come out to look at the items needing repair. He never came out and has not heard from him. The Select Board agreed to move forward with the items that Mr. Maintenance said he could take care of. John said to let him know that we can get any paint and stain that he needs so that cost should be separate and we can take care of that. Sara will reach out to Mr. Maintenance to move forward with his list and let him know we can get the stain and paint.

North Fletcher Road Concern

The owner of the property on North Fletcher Road that had the concern regarding the trash sent a letter explaining that this has all been cleaned up and is taken care of. The letter is in the review folder for the Select Board to review.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 6:55pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant