

Town of Groton
Select Board Work Session Minutes
January 9, 2024

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

John called the meeting to order at 4:30pm.

Meeting with June and Olin Garneau- All Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (John, Ron, Tony, Sara, Chief Baga, Bill, Patti)

Last Meeting:

- a) Reviewed:
 - i. Hazard Descriptions
 - ii. Table 3.2, Historic Hazard Identification
 - iii. Tables 4.1-4.4, Critical Infrastructure & Key Resources (CIKR)
- b) Worked on:
 - i. Table 6.1, Capabilities Assessment
 - ii. Table 7.1, Past Hazard Mitigation Plan Assessment

Today's Topics:

- a) Review:
 - i. Table 6.1, Capabilities Assessment
 - ii. Table 7.1, Past Hazard Mitigation Plan Assessment
- b) Work on:
 - i. Table 9.1, Mitigation Action Plan
 - ii. STAPLEE

Homework:

- a) Review materials sent by MAPS
- b) Digital Photos – contributions welcome
- c) Items from today's meeting to follow up on:
 - a. Check to see if the master plan has natural hazards or climate change information
 - b. Update Code Red information on the website

Future Meetings:

- Tuesday, February 6, 2024 – it was agreed to cancel this meeting.
- Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at 4:30pm

Public Hearing

We need to schedule the 1st public hearing on the budget. This needs to be done before 2/16/24 but John is gone for the meeting on 2/6/24. Also, the attorney emailed and stated that the HB349/exiting SAU4 Public Hearing can be done the same night but needs to be noticed separately which means opened and closed separately. The Select Board agreed to change all meetings from 2/6/24 to the following week, so they will be on 2/13/24 instead. The Select Board also agreed that there was not a need to have another Select Board meeting in January. They agreed to have a work session during elections on January 23, 2024 at 2:00pm. Sara will post these changes.

Updated budget with current 2023 YTD totals

Sara provided an updated budget with the current 2023 YTD totals. She will still pay bills out of 2023 through next week if they come in so this is subject to change. This also has totals if all warrant articles that were submitted are put on the warrant. The Select Board went over any areas they think need to be increased. Sara will check with Ruth and Bubba on a few things to see if they think any increases are needed now that we have the 2023YTD totals.

Warrant Articles

The Select Board started looking through the warrant articles that the departments submitted. Sara explained that she put all submissions on the warrant article lists and the Select Board can decide what to remove, etc. Sara also explained that she heard that they will be submitting a zoning ordinance so she reserved a warrant article for this. The Select Board went over the following warrant articles that Sara put together so far and the Select Board can decide which ones to keep or to remove.

- Article 2 is for the HB349/exiting SAU4 voting.
- Article 3 is for the operating budget. This will have to be adjusted to reflect the changes that the Select Board just made to the budget.
- Article 4 is the money to go to the Capital Reserve Funds. There was no money put in this last year so it is important that money be put into this. The Select Board agreed on the following:
 - Public Works CRF: \$50,000.
 - Disaster Relief CRF: \$50,000.00
 - Town House CRF: \$10,000.00
 - Police Cruiser CRF: \$10,000.00
 - Truck/Sander CRF: \$10,000.00
 - Heavy Equipment CRF: \$10,000.00
 - Assessing Reval CRF: \$7,500.00
- Article 5 is for the paving of the Transfer Station and new Public Works building. We have a grant so the Town would need to raise \$45,000 through taxation.
- Article 6 is to raise \$80,000 for the Towns portion to repair damages from the December 2022 storm.
- Article 7 is to raise \$55,000 for chip sealing.
- Article 8 is to raise \$36,000 for the new compactor with converter at the Transfer Station.
- Article 9 is to raise \$17,500 for a new equipment trailer for the Highway Department.
- Article 10 is to raise \$11,500 for a new mower for the Highway Department.
- Article 11 is to raise \$4,800 for a garage door at the Transfer Station.
- Article 12 is to raise \$4,200 for a new security system at the Town House.
- Article 13 is for the 3% of the Timber Tax for the Conservation Commission from the unassigned fund balance.
- Article 14 is for the solar property tax exemption. The Select Board agreed not to put this on this year's warrant and to revisit this next year.
- Article 15 is for the bridge money. We can either vote to change the wording of the Atwell Orange Brook Bridge CRF to be Town Bridges CRF and to change the purpose to cover construction, reconstruction, replacement and maintenance of all Town Bridges. This would require a 2/3 majority vote. The attorney said if you don't think you will get a 2/3 majority vote then we should do it in two parts and establish a new CRF for Town Bridges. This only requires a majority vote. There is wording provided for both. However, NHMA stated that they do not believe it would be appropriate to put these funds into a CRF. They are non-lapsing and there is no time limit on when these should be spent. Since these funds have limitations, they feel it would be inappropriate to mix these with other funds, such as the money already in the Atwell Orange Brook Bridge CRF. The Select Board agreed last year to keep it in the general fund for a year but then if it isn't used to put in a warrant article next year to create a CRF for this and it has not been used yet. The Select Board agreed to go the

route of keeping this and change the wording of the Atwell Orange Brook Bridge CRF to Town Bridges CRF.

- Article 16 is the normal last warrant article to allow the Selectmen to transact any other business that may legally come before the Town.

HB349 info- articles of agreement, warrant and public hearing info

Terry had sent over the articles of agreement, the warrant and the public hearing information. The Select Board had already approved the draft of the articles of agreement. Sara updated the warrant to reflect this article and put it first and reached out to attorney on public hearing which can be done on the same night as the budget public hearing as stated above. Sara asked John if he is aware of anything else that the Select Board need to do regarding this. He will know more after tomorrow's meeting.

Email from USDA regarding info before bidding- see email from Doug

Rena from USDA sent the following email to go over a few of the items they will need before an authorization to bid can be provided.

1. Payment and Performance Bond (PPB) - will be provided by the contractor. The cost charge by the contractor is not included in the Opinion of Probable Cause (OPC). The OPC can include the cost of the PPB or Groton can include as a line item on the preliminary Monthly Project Budget Report. If Groton decides to include on the preliminary MPBR. If the PPB is included on the prelim-MPBR then once Groton has awarded a construction contract that would include the PPB then an updated final MPBR would remove that line item and be included in the cost of construction.
2. MPBR – Will need to be included in the prelim and final review and approved MPBR. I had sent the MPBR on September 25.

Sara had worked on the MPBR and sent it to Doug for review before she went out for surgery so she followed up with him on that and to see what his thoughts were on the email from Rena. Doug emailed back that "I think the next step is to meet with Rena to determine how to handle the Payment and Performance Bond (PPB) as it relates to the MPBR. I believe she is suggesting to include the PPB in the MPBR document for now and then once a contractor is on board, the MPBR will be adjusted to cancel it out. Rena and Tracy mentioned a typical percentage of 3-4% to include during the last meeting, so we can discuss this again with her to be sure there is adequate coverage."

The Select Board agreed that we can set up a call or meeting with Rena and Doug to discuss this. Sara will email to set this up.

Email from NHMA on HB 1002

Sara had sent the email from NHMA to the Select Board and put in review folder. She asked the Select Board for their thoughts on this. The Select Board agreed to support this. Sara will create a support letter. **John motioned to come in and sign this when the letter is ready, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

Email from resident to set up nonpublic meeting

A resident requested to set up a meeting to discuss an update with his tax issue. The Select Board agreed to meet 1/23/24 at 2:00pm. Sara will contact him to let him know.

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 6:51pm, Tony 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant