

**TOWN OF GROTON
SELECT BOARD MEETING
February 19, 2013**

In Attendance: Christina Goodwin, Kyle Andrews, Miles Sinclair, Pamela Hamel (Administrative Assistant)

Audience Members Present

Christina called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

MINUTE APPROVAL

Christina motioned to approve the minutes of February 12 as written, Kyle 2nd, so voted.

UPDATES

Groton Wind, LLC Public Hearing

Miles gave a brief update on the public hearing. The Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) addressed a number of different issues including:

- Fire/EMS training. The Town of Rumney and some interveners are claiming that Groton Wind (GW) was to provide training including tower rescue. GW did provide training but not tower rescue. GW specifically stated that they would handle their own tower rescue and Fire/EMS would take over at ground level.
- Payment for Training: The Town of Rumney believes their personnel should be paid for the training. GW said they provided the training but this does not include personnel costs and they would only pay for the actual training itself.
- Relocation of the Operations & Maintenance Building and two turbines: some interveners and the counsel for the public are claiming that GW did not have the authority to relocate the building or turbines. GW stated that their interpretation of the Certificate of Site and Facility is that the Department of Environmental Services (DES) had oversight. The changes were submitted to DES and approval was received.
- Maintenance of roads during the winter months: The Town of Rumney is asking that GW maintain the roads for emergency vehicle access year round. This provision is included in Groton Wind's agreement with the Town of Groton and not in the agreement with the Town of Rumney. GW is claiming that the sites are accessible via an all-terrain vehicle (snowcat) in the winter months.

It was agreed that the parties involved would get together with Mike Iacopino (counsel for the SEC) acting as mediator to discuss options for resolution. The Select Board's position regarding road maintenance is that the safety of the public is paramount and that emergency services are provided in the safest and most effective means possible. They are willing to meet with GW to discuss this provision of the agreement.

OLD BUSINESS

Groton Wind Payments During Facility Testing Period

Christina asked Pam to send her a copy of the Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to look for different

projects for these funds. Christina also suggested using some of the funds for the purchase of a new copier. This topic will be tabled until the March 5 Select Board meeting. At that time Miles will have the information needed to get a quote from NHEC for installing electricity at the park.

Groton Wind Signage

Groton's Site Plan Review Regulations (SPR) require that signs be limited in size to 20 square feet. Kyle suggested that although this project is not subject to these regulations, if Groton Wind has not yet built the signs, that they should be asked if they will alter them to meet the specs in the SPR regulations. The Board agreed and this issue will be revisited if the signs are already built.

Petitioned Warrant Articles

The two petitioned warrant articles regarding commercial wind energy facilities are advisory only. The moderator asked the Board to give their input regarding the allowance of discussion/vote. The Board feels that if a motion is made and seconded on the articles they are willing to hear what people have to say. They will explain that the articles are only advisory and not legally binding.

Rumney Fire/EMS Contracts

The Board reported that Rumney has submitted the contracts for Fire/EMS services. Although there is little change in the contract amounts, Rumney is requesting an increase in personnel wages from \$11 to \$15 an hour with a new required minimum of 3 hours paid. This increase would more than triple Groton's personnel costs. The Board previously responded to a draft contract; that the increase was unreasonable and unacceptable and offered to meet with the Rumney Board to discuss the issue. As of the date of this new submission, Rumney has never contacted the Board to arrange a meeting, nor responded to this Board's concerns. Instead they sent a letter stating that the increase will be implemented. The Board had discussed this increase and some response issues with Fire Chief Roger Thompson. The Chief has recommended that the Board not sign a contract. Currently Hebron responds to all calls and can cover the entire Town and there is the possibility of having coverage from Wentworth as well. The Board is reluctant to make this decision without hearing from those property owners who would be most affected: anyone living on Halls Brook Road and North Groton Road from Halls Brook Road to Route 118 and also River and Bailey Hill Roads, etc. They are concerned where this issue with Rumney is going. At this time, Hebron is providing better service for less money. The Board will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, March 19 at 7:00pm to discuss this issue. Prior to the hearing they will reach out to all property owners at that end of Town with a letter explaining the situation.

SB 121

Christina motioned to sign the letter to all the Town's representatives, Senator Forrester and Governor Hassan regarding SB 121, Miles 2nd, so voted. This bill proposes a change with the meals and rooms tax distribution formula which could result in a decrease in revenue of approximately 50% or more for Groton. The Board opposes this bill.

SB 36

Kyle motioned to sign the letter to the Town's representatives, Senator Forrester and Governor Hassan regarding SB36, Christina 2nd, so voted. This bill proposes a full property tax exemption for Veterans who have a service-connected total and permanent disability. The Board supports Veterans but suggests including language regarding a possible cap or income/asset limits.

Work Session

The Board will have a work session on Tuesday, March 12 at 4pm.

NEW BUSINESS

2013 MS-5

The office will be closed on Friday, March 1 for the MS-5 (financial) audit.

Short PILOT Year Invoice

Groton Wind's payment amount for the 'short PILOT year' will be \$135,978.08. This covers from the Commercial Operation Date (December 28, 2012) until March 31, 2013.

Supervisor of the Checklist Appointment

The Supervisors have appointed Paula Stata to fill the vacant position. Ms. Stata has already been sworn in and will be participating in the local elections.

Town Report

Christina reported that she will have the Town Report dedication submitted by Friday.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

The Library Trustees have a meeting on Wednesday, February 27 at 5:00pm.

The Road Committee meeting scheduled for February 20 has been postponed.

Helen Santoro expressed concern regarding an individual who is not stopping when they come off of Nedeau Lane onto North Groton Road. The Board encouraged her to speak with the Police Department as this is an enforcement issue.

Kyle motioned to adjourn at 8:10pm, Christina 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pamela Hamel