

TOWN OF GROTON  
SELECT BOARD MEETING  
May 7, 2024

**In Attendance: John Rescigno, Tony Albert, Ron Madan and Sara Smith (Town Administrator)**

**Audience Members Present**

John called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

**MINUTE APPROVAL**

**John motioned to approve the Work Session Meeting minutes of April 16, 2024 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted. John motioned to approve the Non-Public Work Session Meeting minutes of April 16, 2024 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

**John motioned to approve the Select Board Meeting minutes of April 16, 2024 as written, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

*Public Works Building Costs-Casey Kuplin*

Casey and Heath met with the Select Board to go over some of the costs with the Public Works Building. He said after going over this numbers and backing out some of the federally mandated line items, he thinks we could get it down to \$536,400. There are a few lines he doesn't know about yet that he is waiting to hear back on such as HVAC and electric. The \$536,400 is backing out the \$35,000 management fee thinking that the Select Board and Bubba could oversee the work and we can save on this money. Tony said that we could use the Town House for meetings instead of job trailers too. Casey said he did back all of that out. He said he can go through it line by line.

This also includes taking out the following costs: Dumpsters for \$7,500; the porta toilets for \$2,800; the job trailer for \$3,500; the Construction Management for \$35,000; the appliances for \$1,579; the cabinets for \$3,300; the gutter system for \$1,790; the insulation for \$33,000 (Heath said this is for the spray foam upgrade); the fire alarm for \$16,751; the generator for \$13,750 (he feels we could do this later after the building is up); the storm water management for the dry well for water retention for \$5,800; the safety bollards for \$6,900. He said that taking all of this out and going back to square one and removing his 15% as well was a savings of \$162,385. That brought the bottom line to \$536,400.

He said he will send the Select Board a copy of the spreadsheet within the next few days. He said he was having technical difficulties so he wasn't able to do the spreadsheet. Sara said that if he cannot get it to work that he can bring the numbers in and she can create the spreadsheet with him. Sara said that the spreadsheet is what USDA and the architect want to see.

It was asked if this included the water heater as well. He explained that it did and that is part of the HVAC. We went from \$53,150 to \$23,000. That is \$30,000 for the water heater. He also said that it may get even lower once we hear back from the other places. He also said that these are the prices for the people he works with but we could call other contractors to see if this is the lower price.

Casey said he feels this number is pretty encouraging. Sara asked if the \$536,400 was just for the building with no salt shed. Casey confirmed this is just the building, no salt shed. Sara said she applied for a grant for the salt and sand shed together and we should know by December on that so we could do that next year.

Tony said that Sara just created a spreadsheet for the Select Board that shows how much money we have for this project. The Town has \$739,000 with the grant. Sara explained that it would be \$489,000 without that grant money that the Town has from the money they raised in 2023 from taxation and the unreserved fund balance and the money in the Capital Reserve fund.

The first step is to get the spreadsheet together. We will then send the spreadsheet to the architect and USDA to see if we remove these items if we can still get the grant. If we can then we can move forward with the grant. If we can't, we need to decide if we want to move forward with the grant or not. Sara mentioned depending on which way we go, we will either have to have a special town meeting or a public hearing to meet with the town to discuss this. John said the good thing is that the numbers he gave are well under the \$739,000 that we have with the grant so even if they add some things back in, we may still be able to move forward with the grant.

Heath asked how quick they would review it. Sara said she cannot really answer because you never know with the federal government but lately, they have been responding pretty quickly.

Tony said that the other thing to keep in mind is that whoever is chosen to be the contractor will have to pay all of the subs. The Town would cut a check to one person so it would be on the general contractor to hire out the other contractors and to pay them. John said that it would also be best to have one person overseeing it all. Bubba said it has to be one person and should be the contractor since it is their project and under their contract. Casey said that if this is the case he will probably have to add back in the 15% to cover the general contractor and the management costs which will probably bring it back up over \$600,000.00.

Tony said dealing with the USDA for this grant for the building has been extremely eye opening. The other grants for vehicles or road projects are pretty cut and dry but this has been difficult. Bubba said that it also doesn't help that everyone we were working with when we first applied is no longer there and it is newer people. Casey said he can only imagine because this is his first experience dealing with something like this. Sara said this is why a lot of people do not go for grants because they make it so difficult.

The Select Board thanked Casey and Heath for all of their hard work on this project. Casey said he will send the spreadsheet over this week. The Select Board said we will then send it to USDA and the architect and go from there to see if how we should move forward.

#### *Local Septic Approval (updated)- Map 2 Lot 86-1*

The septic designer emailed in an updated Septic Plan and local approval for Map 2 Lot 84-1. The Select Board approved one for this address at the last meeting but they had to add a pump tank. All the information is correct. **John motioned to sign the updated local septic approval for Map 2 Lot 86-1, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Intent to Cut- Map 2 Lot 41*

The logger submitted an intent for Map 2 Lot 41 for the property located on North Groton Road/Halls Brook Road. This is about a 36- acre cut. No bond is needed. **John motioned to sign intent to cut for Map 2 Lot 41, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Intent to Cut- Map 9 Lot 8*

The owner submitted an intent for Map 9 Lot 8 for the property located on Groton Hollow Road. This is about a 118- acre cut. No bond is needed. **John motioned to sign intent to cut for Map 9 Lot 8, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Building Permit- Map 6 Lot 31-1*

The owner sent in a building permit for renovating and improving structure and adding a 160 square foot addition to their property on North Groton Road. They did include the PUC approval and the DES Septic approval. All the information is correct. **John motioned to sign the building permit for Map 6 Lot 31-1, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

### *Disposal Agreement Map 6 Lot 47*

The owner of 61 Giovanna Road dropped off a disposal agreement. **John motioned to sign the disposal agreement, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

### *Resident Concern*

Lee McClain and another gentleman came in to the office with concerns and it was agreed for them to be put on the agenda but they didn't show up to the meeting. Sara said that when they came in, they stated that they have concerns with their neighbors. There was a building permit that was approved by the Select Board on December 5, 2023 for a 16x27 roof over saw mill that said no electric, no water. They said it is always lit up so there is electric there. John said they could have a generator. Sara said they could also be running an extension cord but Lee said it is set up with electrical. They also have concerns about the time that they are out there working because it is always late at night. Sara had told them to come to the meeting to talk to the Select Board and the Police Chief about their concerns so everyone is on the same page and it can be decided what can be done. The Select Board agreed to table this since they didn't show up.

### **SELECT BOARD ITEMS:**

#### *Building Permit- Map 5 Lot 107*

The owner sent in a building permit to replace the existing mobile home with a new 28x64 mobile home at their property on North Groton Road. They did include the DES Septic approval. Since it is a mobile home, it is exempt from the PUC approval. They will provide the energy code information once it is completed. All the information is correct. **John motioned to sign the building permit for Map 5 Lot 107, Tony 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Memorial Day Program*

The Memorial Day Program will be on Monday, May 27, 2024 at 10:30am at the Groton Town House. This year it will be on Henry Dearborn. They asked if someone is available to let them in to the building that day around 9:45am. Tony will let them in. Sara will send him a reminder as it gets closer.

### **DEPARTMENT ITEMS:**

#### *Highway Department*

Bubba mentioned the following Highway Department items:

- They are trying to get Morrison here to grade the roads. He is hoping they will be out in the next few weeks.
- They are working on getting the project started on North Groton Road which is with the FEMA funding.
- They cleaned up some wash outs on Province Road.
- They have been cleaning up all of the stuff from winter.
- The chip sealing is looking like it will be done in August. Sara and Bubba are going to work on putting the request for bids out.
- Sara mentioned that the HMGP grant for the North Groton Road Culvert is looking promising.

### **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:**

#### *Old Rumney Road Concern*

Pam asked if the Town is still sending letters out to property owners on Class VI roads inquiring if they are going to do any work on the road. John said yes, we do. She asked if we received any from Old Rumney road. Sara said we received two letters from two owners for Old Rumney Road. They were using equipment to work on the ditches. They left the main part of the road all rutted and mucky. Pam showed pictures to the Select Board.

Sara will look at the ones that sent letters in and reach out to them to ask if they have done work on the road. If not, we can send letters to everyone on the road. Tony said we can also have Bubba look at the road. Pam said you can drive out to the powerlines. She said before this work was done the road was drying out really well but then she went out there today and once you get beyond the powerlines it is a mess. She said whatever help they tried to do actually made it worse.

It was asked who enforces that and who is in charge. Also, if someone does damage who is responsible. John said that the Select Board is in charge of enforcing it. The resident asked if the road is permanently damaged and is unpassable what happens. Bubba said the road would have to be looked at and decided if the road is passable or not and what should happen. The resident asked if anyone can just go out and do road work or cut trees on a class VI road.

Chief said he has been looking into Class VI Roads. Technically you cannot stop people from using it. They have to have public access. You can put a gate but it has to be unlocked so everyone has access. The only thing the town can do is post it for weight limits seasonally. The Town is not allowed to do maintenance but the people on the road are allowed with approval from the Town. Sara explained that Class VI roads are town owned but not town maintained. Anyone that wants to do work on a Class VI Road is required to submit the work to the Select Board for approval. She said the letters do state that the Town, whether that be the Select Board or the Road Agent will check on the work being done to make sure it is what is being submitted. Bubba said the problem is catching them.

It was agreed that we would reach out to the ones that submitted road maintenance letters and see if it was them and then go from there.

Casey asked if someone has property on a class VI road, do they still have to submit a driveway permit. Bubba said yes, they do. The town still has to approve any work done on the road, including where the driveway would meet the road. Sara said we only do not do driveway permits for private roads. Casey said if he bought land on a class VI road and wanted to bring the road to town specs would that depend on the Town or is it a state RSA. It was explained that it is an RSA and Chief gave Casey the information on it.

Pam asked if we received a driveway permit on Old Rumney Road for the property that she believes is owned by Kahler. She believes it would have been in 2022 or 2023. Sara said she doesn't know off hand but she can look to see.

#### *Pond on Property*

A concerned resident asked what the status of building a pond on his property would be. He has a hole on his property that he cleaned up that is a frog pond now but if he wanted to do a large pond, who does he need permission from to do this. Sara explained it would be state permitting not town. Casey agreed that it would be State and he said it would be DES. Pam said he can also meet with the Conservation Commission. Sara said they meet Thursday night. Casey said you can go on the DES website and gave him some information regarding ponds. He said he would like to go to the brook and hook the brook into it. It was explained that would be a problem because you cannot change direction of the water from the brook. Tony said if you make it accessible from the road, you could put a dry hydrant in it for the fire departments. This could help with his insurance because of the fire suppression.

#### *Incident in Town*

A concerned resident asked Chief if he keeps a log here for activity that happens in Town. The reason he asks is that there was allegedly an incident that happened recently that could possibly concern the townspeople and he didn't know if there were any details about what that incident was. He doesn't know the details but it is concerning knowing what the individual has been involved in, in the past. Chief asked if he means the police

presence by outside agencies. The resident confirmed. Chief said that he doesn't have a log per say. The resident asked if he has to pull an assist number for that. Chief said he is not required to. It is just like an assist to outside agencies. The resident asked if there was any call for service for that. Chief said no. He said he was out of service with Plymouth Dispatch and they were aware he was out of service to assist. The resident said he is asking the townspeople can look at the log to see the residency you were at, if the individual did or did not get arrested or any details like that. Chief said not from him but Plymouth Dispatch would have a log for him assisting another agency for that call and where that call would be.

Sara said this is a hot topic in town. A lot of residents are concerned and have called or even gone to the office to see what is going on and if they were safe. She said she didn't know any details so she just explained that to them and said that if there was risk to the residents, she would think they would have been told to lock up their house and stay inside or evacuate if needed. She said our town is not used to seeing such a heavy police presence in Town so it is concerning when they do. Pam asked what details could be given.

The resident said the main concern is the activity the individual used to have at that residence that is concerning to him and would be concerning to anyone with kids. He doesn't know the particulars but this person makes hm nervous so he wants to know what information Chief can give such as if this is an ongoing investigation or if anyone was arrested. John said all he knows is that something did happen but we do not know the details. Chief said that at this point all he knows is that it was an investigation and he hasn't been informed if anyone has turned themselves in or if any arrests have been made. The resident asked if that means no official charges have been brought forward because that would be public knowledge. Chief said not that he is aware of and yes it would be public knowledge if it was.

There were no further questions or comments from the audience.

#### *Demolition*

Casey asked if in Groton a permit is needed to tear down a house. Groton does not have a permit for this. He also asked who he would get a driveway permit from. Sara said she can get him one after the meeting.

**Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 7:45pm, Tony 2<sup>nd</sup>, so voted.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith  
Town Administrator