

TOWN OF GROTON  
SELECT BOARD MEETING  
May 21, 2024

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

**Audience Members Present**

John called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**MINUTE APPROVAL**

**John motioned to approve the Work Session Meeting minutes of May 7, 2024 as written, Ron 2nd, so voted.**  
**John motioned to approve the Select Board Meeting minutes of May 7, 2024 as written, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

*Disposal Agreement Map 7 Lot 53*

The owner of 764 North Groton Road dropped off a disposal agreement. **John motioned to sign the disposal agreement, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

Reports of cuts/yield certificate

- The Town received a report of cut for Map 1 Lots 16 & 21, operation # 23-193-06-T. This was for a 19-acre cut on Bailey Hill Road. The amount of the tax is \$430.40. **John motioned to sign the yield certificate for Map 1 Lots 16 & 21, Ron 2nd, so voted.**
- The Town received a report of cut for Map 5 Lot 132, operation # 23-193-12-T. This was for a 30-acre cut on Hammerhead Road. The amount of the tax is \$275.89. **John motioned to sign the yield certificate for Map 5 Lot 132, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

*Charitable recommendations memo*

This is a Memo from Sara explaining the religious, educational and charitable exemptions have been received and sent to the Assessor and should be approved by the Board. These are reviewed by Avitar every year. They have included their approval letters. **John motioned to sign the charitable exemption approval Memo, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

*Building Permit Map 5 Lot 26-1*

The Town received a building permit for Map 5 Lot 26-1 on Sculptured Rocks Road. This is for a 12x16 deck. **John motioned to approve and sign the building permit for Map 5 Lot 26-1, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

*Release Form- Map 6 Lot 73*

The Town received a building permit a few months ago for Map 6 Lot 73 on 114 Dodge Road. The Select Board approved the permit contingent on the owner submitted the signed release form. Sara sent at a letter at that time and still has not sent the approved building permit until this was received. Now that it is received Sara will send it to Grafton County for recording and will also send him his copy of the signed permit. **John motioned to sign the release form for Map 6 Lot 73, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

*Abatement Requests*

The Town received a request for abatement due to three campers being removed from the property as of October 2023. This information was noted on the inventory notes and was confirmed with Avitar that they have

been removed but they were not removed from the property assessment cards before the warrant was printed. Avitar will be removing these from the property assessment cards. **John motioned to approve and sign the abatement requests, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

#### *Hebron Vote on leaving SAU4*

Hebron voted on 5/16/24 and they voted in favor of leaving SAU4 with a vote of 218 to 21. For all three towns that was a total of 618 yes votes and 59 no votes. The next steps are to create a school board and put those pieces together.

#### **SELECT BOARD ITEMS:**

##### *Building Permit Map 6 Lot 76*

The Town received a building permit for Map 6 Lot 76 on Snoburk Lane. This is for a 30x45 garage for farm equipment and a 30x30 barn. This is on a private road so this will need a release form and needs to go before the Planning Board. **John motioned to table the building permit for Map 6 Lot 76 until the Planning Board reviews it and provides their recommendation, Ron 2nd, so voted.**

#### **DEPARTMENT ITEMS:**

##### *Highway Department*

Bubba mentioned the following Highway Department items:

- Morrison started grading the roads which are Bailey Hill, North Fletcher, Edgar Albert Road and Old Rumney Road. They should be done tomorrow.
- There was a concern with a tree on River Road. He went and looked at it and it seems okay and live but he reached out to John Faucher to go look at it to make sure it wasn't rotted. He thinks it fine and that it just seems to be growing that way. Chief said that is what he thought too but he is not an arborist.

#### **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:**

##### *School clarification*

A concerned resident said that regarding the school changes, he was recounting a conversation that they had at the informational session on March 14, 2024. At that meeting, according to his memory and others that attended, the talk about transitioning into 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the Bridgewater school came up. He recalls that John said that 5<sup>th</sup> graders will have the option to go into 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Bridgewater Hebron Village School (BHVS). He believes the quote was seamless transition starting essentially now, so a 5<sup>th</sup> grader could go into 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade at BHVS. Is that accurate? John answered that nothing takes place until 2025.

The concerned resident said what he recalls specifically John saying was that they were having a conversation and this resident asked will 5<sup>th</sup> graders have to go to 6<sup>th</sup> grade in Bristol and then back to 7<sup>th</sup> grade at BHVS. From what he recalls John said that no they can stay right at Bridgewater if they are in 5<sup>th</sup> grade now, and go right into 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The term that he is positive that was used is a seamless transition. He is not looking to rehash the entire conversation which he thought was pretty positive but he would like to specifically know is if John can say he was mistaken, if the resident's memory is mistaken or if John was correct in saying that current 5<sup>th</sup> graders at BHVS will be able to go into 6<sup>th</sup> at BHVS this next year in the seamless transition. John said that the current BHVS goes to 5<sup>th</sup> grade so when this goes through, they can stay where they are or they can go to middle school. The concerned resident said he understands that but he is specifically asking about right now, a current 5<sup>th</sup> grader, who is graduating in a few weeks, are they able to stay at BHVS for 6<sup>th</sup> grade starting in September? Bubba said no. The concerned citizen said he is asking John specifically because after that meeting in March, he went around telling everyone that John Rescigno said they can stay right where they are for the seamless transition and they do not have to go to Bristol or Plymouth and then come back. He said other people

were telling him that this is not accurate, it will only apply to the current 4<sup>th</sup> graders that next year will be in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and then in 2025 when this is implemented then they will be able to stay at BHVS for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade and not have to leave. John said that from his understanding, which he will confirm when he has his next meeting, is that when this goes through and it transitions over in 2025, it will have 6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms there and then the following year will have 7<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms.

The concerned resident said he thinks that he is tracking what he is saying now but just to be very clear, his statement as a matter of fact from what John said before on March 14<sup>th</sup>, when he asked if a 5<sup>th</sup> grader can stay at Bridgewater right to 8<sup>th</sup> grade starting now and he said John said yes, we want the seamless transition, they want it to be as if nothing ever happened, and that included the teachers and everything else that was talked about. So, to be clear that is not the case. The current 5<sup>th</sup> graders that are graduating this year do not have the option to go to 6<sup>th</sup> grade at BHVS because that doesn't apply until 2025, is that correct? John said that 2025 is when this takes place. The concerned resident said that the current 5<sup>th</sup> graders now will have to go somewhere else for 6<sup>th</sup> grade, correct? John said if they are graduating this year then yes, they would have to go to the middle school. He can confirm this.

The concerned resident said that just so that they are not on odds with memories here, he asked John if he recalls this conversation and what he is saying. John said yes. The resident asked if it would be fair to say that John isn't lying to the town to get them to vote for this but that John made a mistake in what he said. John said possibly but he would want to confirm this. The resident said that he is only saying this because when he advised people of what John said in that discussion, they went through the roof and said that isn't true and it is wrong. He has text messages from the 18<sup>th</sup> when he checked with others who confirmed that they heard John say that. He doesn't want this to create a situation where people want to come get John because they feel he tried to trick the Town into voting for this. He wants to make sure that he recalls correctly before he goes any further with saying what John said. John said to get this straight he is asking about 2025 what school they can go to. The resident said no, for the school year that the kids start 6<sup>th</sup> grade in September 2024. He feels that John led him to believe these students will be able to stay where they are, specifically so much that he went home and asked his kid where she wanted to go to school next year because she has the option of three different places. It was brought up again when this Hebron vote came up and he was reassured that the information he was provided was faulty which is why he is here to clarify that so that he can be accurate. John wanted to confirm again, he is asking in 2024 a 6<sup>th</sup> grader will be going to what school? The resident said that is what he wants to know and wants confirmation for the record or for John. He wants to know if this was mis-information "fake news" or if you are right and everyone else is wrong. John said he will double check. The resident asked where one will find that answer, will this be addressed publicly at the next meeting or to him. John said that he will let him know. The resident asked if it will be through the minutes or if he will be contacted. John said we can do both and asked if we have his contact information. The resident said Sara has it.

Ann wanted to make a statement that they are both kind of right. She said that John is talking 2025. The resident said no. Ann said the new school district doesn't start until 2025. The resident said he is aware. She said she knows he is aware but people are forgetting that 2024 doesn't count towards that school year, it will not be until 2025. John said July of 2025 is when this change will take place. Ann said 2024 will be the same way it is now and 2025 is when it will change and she thinks this is where people are getting messed up. The resident said he is tracking what Ann is saying but his question is if the fiscal year starts July 1<sup>st</sup> so is this July 1<sup>st</sup> considered fiscal year 2025 or 2024. Bubba said it depends on who is handling it, the State and Town go by different dates for their years.

Sara read the minutes that she found from that March Meeting that touch on this point. She read "A concerned resident stated that the situation he is in right now with a 5<sup>th</sup> grader is that she will be a 6<sup>th</sup> grader, so when this goes through in 2025, she will be in the middle school. Will she have to go back to BHVS? John said that is the beauty of this. The way they worked it out is that she can choose to go where she wants to. She could stay at

*the middle school in Bristol or she could go back to BHVS. The student and the parents can decide. You are getting the opportunity to choose your child's path. Virginia said some kids are ready for the larger school and others are not. Who are we to say that they shouldn't have that opportunity."* The resident said he read all of that and is aware of all of that. John said that should be accurate because it starts in 2025. The resident said where he is recalling is that there was a special ask if they could stay at BHVS which he didn't see that when he was scouring the minutes before he came tonight. John said nothing takes place in 2024. The resident said that is what he is being told but the conversation him and John had was specific to 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade staying the way that it is. John said that would be for 2025. The resident said then the current 5<sup>th</sup> graders will have to go elsewhere until this goes into effect in 2025 and then they could come back to BHVS if they want to but have to go somewhere else for 6<sup>th</sup> grade. John said that in 2024 nothing changes so it will stay exactly the way it is now. In 2025 is when it changes. The resident said he understands all of that and he is just trying to recount the conversation from March and the information that he was presenting after the fact that was not accurate. John said what is in the minutes from that meeting are accurate. Next year nothing happens, not until 2025. The resident said that is why he didn't come in here as a matter of fact. What he recalled that he asked and was told is not accurate. If that wasn't said he will accept that but that is what he recalls and that is what he was promoting to people until he was told it wasn't accurate. Other residents that were in the meeting concurred with what he said. He just wants to clarify it.

John said that he hopes that townspeople did not make such an important decision on one meeting and didn't attend several meetings that were held. The resident said he thinks he understands what John is saying. John said that in 2024 nothing changes so nothing happens but he will double check and get back to the resident. The resident said that he is pretty sure he is clear now and just to be sure what he knows leaving here is that the current 5<sup>th</sup> graders will be going to 6<sup>th</sup> grade in Bristol in the fall, period. Next year, the 5<sup>th</sup> graders will have the option to stay in Bridgewater but the current 5<sup>th</sup> graders do not have that option. John said that is correct. The resident said so it will not be a seamless transition until next year. John said the transition doesn't happen until next year, he said that was made clear in the meetings. The resident said that was not made clear which is why he is there. John said that 2024 never came out of his mouth, that he can tell him for a fact. Sara wanted to confirm then that the same will go for the 7<sup>th</sup> graders then. John said that for 2025 there will not be 7<sup>th</sup> grade at BHVS. Sara wanted to clarify that would not happen until 2026. John said that is correct.

John told the resident he can look into to answer this question the best he can. The resident said he feels this has been answered and John doesn't have to go any further since it is answered.

There were no other questions or comments from the audience.

**Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 7:25pm, Ron 2<sup>nd</sup>, so voted.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith  
Town Administrator