

Town Of Groton, Vermont – Selectboard Minutes, December 10th, 2015 (Approved)

The duly warned meeting of the Groton Selectboard of December 10th, 2015 was held at the intersection of Harv Orr Road and Great Road, Groton, Vermont

Attendance for the meeting included Brent Smith, Phillip Palmer, Jim Langloise, Shawn Crown, Kristy Dickey, William Dickey, Kimberly Smith and Dan Robinson.

The Following Selectboard Members were in attendance: Peter Lyon and Andrew Dorsett

The Meeting was called to order at 7:10 AM

Updates/Adjustments to the Agenda:

Peter Lyon made the following adjustments to the agenda: Address publishing the Town Report, Review of the Union Bank TAN, Review of Personnel Policy and Review of End of Year Budget report.

Review the Town's construction of ditching on Harv Orr Rd. at/near its intersection with the Great Rd: Peter began by asking who was going to walk the Board through the concerns about the ditching. Shawn Crown Began by explaining that the left side ditch at the Harv Orr/Great Road intersection was going to bring debris into the Harv Orr ditch and build up in the stone which would in turn block the water flow causing it to force water into the road. Peter asked what the issue was, Shawn replied lack of stone. Peter responded that the ditch was good, it just needed stone. Shawn replied yes. Further down Harv Orr Road, Shawn explained that His father had moved his fencing back to accommodate widening the road to a class 3 standard which the Harv Orr volunteers have been using 20 ft as the standard. Peter asked Shawn to explain where the issues were because he thought it was a good looking job. Kristy added that there had been work done since she last saw the road. Shawn added that the ditches were too deep and the banks were too steep. Brent added that he and Mary Grant met with Shawn's father Russell Crown, and they had agreed that in the spring when things dry out, they would come back and cut the banks back on both sides and mulch them to prevent erosion. Brent added that one of the concerns for Russell is that if his cattle get out and get into the ditches, they would have a hard time getting out and risk injury. Brent also addressed the depth of the ditches, saying that they needed to be deep enough to drain the road base. He said that he didn't cut the banks back at the time he was ditching because he wasn't sure how far Russell wanted him to go. Andrew asked Brent if there was a plan to widen the road more or just cut the banks back. Brent replied just to cut the banks back. Brent added that the current width meets the class 3 standard. Brent stated that the width is determined by the volume of traffic. Brent added that there are a number of town maintained roads where sections are not 20 feet wide. Andrew said that it looks like the water is flowing good until it get to a spot where the ditch curves. Brent replied that he and Russell are still discussing the best way to handle that water. Russell wants to ditch the right side and keep the water moving towards the stream, Brent would prefer to put a culvert in and move the water to the left side of the road. The left side has a deep ditch that can handle that amount of water with some stone added in there to help with erosion, the right has a small culvert that won't handle the amount of water that will be moving in that ditch during the spring . Brent said that she will have to have that conversation with Russell again in the spring.

Another issue that Shawn wanted to address is that they used to be able to drive up out of Harv Orr road on the left bank if the road becomes unpassable, but with the new ditches, they won't be able to get to the bank. He wanted some stone dumped in the ditch and fill put over it so they could drive over it. Brent was concerned that by doing that it could force water up on the road and undo the work that had been done. Shawn and Jim Langloise's concern was being able to get out during the winter months. However, Jim said he couldn't imagine that the road would be a mud hole this season because of the work that had been done. He added, that it was his opinion, it may not be 100%, but it will be a hell of a lot better than years past. Phillip wanted to add that Harv Orr Road is a class 4 road and the Town of Groton has spent a lot of money on a class 4 road that isn't warranted. The road needs some attention, but a tremendous amount of money has been spent on this section of road. Andrew asked if he meant that there weren't enough residents on the road, Phillip replied that it's a class 4 road. Shawn asked why \$2000 was spent on another class 4 road this past spring. Both Phillip and Brent indicated that was not the case. Peter summarized the concern about the road with most everyone believing that the road will hold up during the upcoming season so there was no need of creating a bypass. Shawn and Kristy both expressed concern about a logging operation that was going to put trucks over the road. That may not be scheduled hopefully until later in the season. Kim Smith arrived and wanted to express her concern about the road being slippery and icy in the winter months. Andrew asked Kim if she was asking the Town to plow and sand, she replied yes. Jim asked if that was something they would have to ask the Select Board for, Brent replied that the Highway Department doesn't maintain class 4 roads during the winter and through mud season, that's according to town ordinance. The residents here would have to petition to get the town ordinance changed. Kristy and Jim added that they were working towards bringing the road up to class 3 so that the town could start maintaining it but realized there was more work to be done. During the walk back up towards Great Road, Peter asked about stone for a section of ditch that appeared deeper than the rest and has some erosion started and though some more stone. Andrew brought up the original agreement that stated the town, because of the way the policy reads, would only provide culverts. He added that his duty was to the taxpayers and if the property owners wanted to kick in for stone that would be up to the residents on the road to pay for. Andrew advised them that they could petition a warrant article for Town Meeting to have the taxpayers reclassify the road.

#### Review Town Report Printing and Distribution:

Peter reported that he had spoken with Martha Crown, one of the Town Auditors, and heard her concerns about reducing the number of reports printed. The consensus of the Board was to announce in this year's report that a new distribution plan was going to be implemented in the following year and outline the new plan to inform resident of options for receiving the Town Report.

#### Review of the Union Bank TAN:

Andrew and Peter reviewed the Union Bank Tax Anticipation Note and approved the TAN and having Lisa move forward. Peter and Andrew added that this should be done with the understanding that the reserve fund would be used first.

**Personnel Policy Review:**

Dan gave Andrew and Peter an updated copy of the personnel policy and let them know that the town employees are hoping to have this updated policy in place for the new year. Andrew and Peter agreed and will review it for the next regular Select Board meeting.

**Updated Budget Review:**

Dan passed along the Budget packet put together by the Treasurer, with notes and highlights for their review in front of the upcoming Select Board Meeting.

**Public to be heard:**

Dan asked about progress on the Memory Wall for the Building Committee. Peter said that work has stalled because of the time of year. Peter suggested that he could check with Brent and see if he had some time in his schedule to set blocks to free up parking spaces on the end of the Community Building which would be beneficial once we do start getting into bad weather.

Select Board Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 am.

Minutes prepared by Dan Robinson, Select Board Secretary