**MINUTES SELECTBOARD MEETING**

**Grafton Town Hall Upstairs In Person/Live**

**With accommodation for persons unable to attend in person via interactive Zoom**

**Monday, January 6, 2025, 6:00 pm**

Present at the meeting in the Town Hall:

Selectboard: Chair Joe Pollio, Vice Chair Cathy Siano-Goodwin, John Gregory, Steve Sargent, and Anna Keegan

Also: Morgan Wilbur, Dottie Cannon, Mary Howard Feder, David Hall, David Rogers, Wendy Martin, Suzanne Welch, Kim Record, Sam Battaglino, Amber Stevens, Patsy Ellis, Colby Record, Russell Record, Joe Neal, and Patrick Cooperman

Present online: Lain Stevens, FactTV, Nancy Merrill, and Charlie Bonin

1. Call to order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Adopt Agenda: It was moved by Anna Keegan, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin to adopt the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approve Minutes of the December 16, 2024, Capital Budget Public Hearing: It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by Anna Keegan, to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2024, Capital Budget Public Hearing. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Approve Minutes of the December 16, 2024, meeting: It was moved by Steve Sargent, seconded by Anna Keegan, to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2024, meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Highway Report: Colby Record reported the road crew had been plowing and sanding through the recent snowstorms. They had also been doing routine truck maintenance. Cathy Siano-Goodwin asked if Record had followed up about repairs on the trailer. Record said he brought it to Osgood’s Welding in Claremont, NH and they would give a price estimate on repair.

6. Clerk/Treasurer: Kim Record asked if there were any questions on the quarterly reports that were sent the week prior. There were none. Record reminded everyone that tax payments are due on February 15th. She also said that the Animal Control Officer Ashley Pinger will be facilitating rabies clinics again this year. The clinics will be on Saturday, February 15th, and Saturday, March 15th from 10-12 at the Town Office. She explained that the Grafton Improvement Association (GIA) has offered to sponsor the clinic, which means the cost of $25 per vaccine will be covered by the GIA. Record said that she would be available on the same days to renew dog licenses. She encouraged people to bring their current rabies certificate. She said that the cost of dog licenses has gone up by $2. The Town will not be recouping the additional cost because it goes directly to the state. Record also mentioned that the audit has been completed by Sullivan Powers and they would be invited to an upcoming meeting to explain their findings. She said that the Town Reports are almost done being put together. She hopes to get it to the printer soon so she has the final copies by the first week of February. Lastly, she said that all petitions for articles to be on the warning are due by January 16th. All petitions for people running for office are due by January 27th.

7. Committee Reports:

Personnel Committee: There was no report.

July 2023 Flood Update: Award Bids for Hinkley Brook Road culvert #24 Project: Joe Pollio said the board had opened 10 bids at the last Selectboard meeting for the replacement of culvert #24 on Hinkley Brook Road. He stated that 2 of the bidders had not followed the instructions. Pollio also mentioned that this is a FEMA project. Morgan Wilbur said she worked with Meghan Brunk, a Vermont Agency of Transportation Technician, and Scott Jensen, River Management Engineer, through the bidding process. There were some questions as to why the bids ranged in price, from $210,120 to $544,000. Wilbur said the cost of materials could drastically affect this as well as the length of travel. Suzanne Welch asked why the Request for Proposals (RFP) said a box culvert was 14’x7’x52’, but some of the bids stated a size of 12’x7’x52’. Wilbur said that after the RFP was sent out, she was made aware that a culver downstream from #24 that had been replaced in 2023 was 12’; therefore, it would not make sense for a culvert upstream to be larger. Wilbur worked with Jensen and Ron Bell, the hired engineer on this project, to change the size of the culvert. Wilbur said she had notified all of the contractors at the pre-bid meeting as well as emailed all of them, so they were all aware of the change. Russell Record asked why 2 bids were not considered. Wilbur said in the RFP, the contractors were asked to separate out mobilization/demobilization, traffic control, and a price per yard of ledge removal. The 2 bids submitted either did not separate any or all of the requests. Record then said on Jamie Gregory Trucking & Excavating’s bid, it said per the specs sent to him by the Town of Grafton’s Town Administrator Morgan Wilbur, dated November 18, 2024. Record said if the size changed after the original RFP, then Jamie Gregory was bidding on the inaccurate size; therefore, he felt there were 3 incorrect bids. Wilbur, after finding the revised RFP, said she had sent the corrected one with the highlighted changes but had not changed the date. She apologized as this had caused confusion. Wilbur suggested that next time a project such as this is sent out, there should be a template showing exactly what the Town expects in the bids. Welch encouraged members of the Selectboard to review the bids, rather than asking Wilbur to do so, in the future. Colby Record requested that as soon as the contractor hits ledge, they should notify the Town. Wilbur said that at the pre-bid meeting, which Record also attended, all contractors were instructed to notify the Town. Record would like to be notified as soon as ledge is hit, rather than after some is trucked off-site. Wilbur said in the letter to the awarded contractor, she would state that request.

It was moved by Steve Sargent, seconded by Anna Keegan, to award the replacement of culvert #24 on Hinkley Brook Road to Jamie Gregory Trucking & Excavating, LLC in the amount of $233,600 and that the culvert be 12’x7’x52’ in size. The motion passed by a vote of 3-1 (Joe Pollio, Anna Keegan, and Steve Sargent voted yes; Cathy Siano-Goodwin voted no) with 1 abstention (John Gregory).

8. Appoint an Ethics Liaison: Morgan Wilbur explained that the Ethics Liaison serves as the point of contact for general information disseminated by the Ethics Commission. This individual would be responsible for sharing information regarding training, for example. They would also be the point of contact if there was a complaint referral from the Ethics Commission. This recommendation is per Act 171, which went into effect on June 10, 2024.

It was moved by Anna Keegan, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, to appoint Morgan Wilbur as the Ethics Liaison. Motion passed unanimously.

9. Other Business: John Gregory mentioned that the Highway Department overtime line item was over budget by 10%. He said there are various ways to control overtime. Colby Record said if there is no work to be done during their regular work hours of 6 a.m. until 2 p.m., he gives the employees the option of going home. However, he said that he would not force them to go home because they had earned overtime by working outside of their regular hours. David Rogers said the amount of overtime fluctuates depending on the weather. Joe Pollio asked Kim Record if there was still time to revise the budget. Record said she would need to know no later than January 16th. After some discussion and suggestions of just sanding and salting the roads on the hills and corners, Rogers and Record said they would try any suggestions to see if they help.

10. Public Comment: Dottie Cannon thanked the Highway Department for their work. She said they have put other towns to shame. Joe Pollio agreed.

Wendy Martin asked if the Selectboard had talked or thought about what may happen with the elementary school, given the status of the budget. Joe Pollio said he had been discussing this with Hardy Merrill, but Merrill thought it is premature to be too concerned. Pollio felt that the board should be at least thinking about what will happen to the school in several years. Cathy Siano-Goodwin said the way the budgets are now, she felt it is not sustainable. Mary Howard Feder said it’s important to note that all schools in the area are shrinking in size.

11. Next regular meeting: Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 6 pm.

12. Adjourn. It was moved by John Gregory, seconded by Steve Sargent, to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Morgan Wilbur