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Town of Grantham Board of Selectmen Budget Work Session & Meeting Minutes December 16, 2015

The budget work session started at 8:45am on Wednesday, December 16, 2015. The meeting was held in the Grantham Town Building, Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at 300 Route 10 South, Grantham, NH.

Present: Chairman Warren Kimball; Selectman Sheridan Brown; Selectman Constance Jones; Town Administrator Melissa White; Road Agent Jeff Hastings and Engineer Erin Darrow of Right Angle Engineering arrived at 1:30pm

2016-17 Budget

- The salary for the new Town Clerk/Tax Collector was set at \$43,000 annually.
- Salaries for all other employees were discussed. Proposed increases will be between 2% - 3%.
- The legal budget was reviewed and the Board felt no increase was needed in this line.
- Health insurance increase is not to exceed 10.45%.
- 2006 1-ton truck is mainly being used for Recreation & Cemeteries. \$3,000 was allocated for maintenance of this vehicle in the Recreation and Cemetery budget (\$1,500 in each department).
- Police Department Overtime budget was reviewed. After the last budget work session Chief Madore had informed Administrator White that approximately \$7,500 was needed to cover holidays and requested the line to be increased to \$10,500. White stated that she questioned whether that would be enough to cover all the other overtime (case load) because the extra monies only equated to an additional 76 hours for the whole year. The Board requested White to obtain the case load OT for the prior three years.
- Police Department Officer Testing budget was reviewed. White informed that if MRI was hired for the recruitment of the new Police Chief the cost would be approximately \$6,500. Monies were added to this line for that purpose.
- The budget was reviewed for the community agencies Grantham has supported in the past along with their specific financial request.
 - Mascoma Valley Health Initiative: Requested \$2,245; Board capped funding at \$1,000
 - Community Alliance of Human Resources: Still waiting for their request letter; White will contact them.
 - Sullivan County Nutritional Services: This program provides Meals on Wheels to home bound seniors. The Board requested White contact them for updated information on how many Grantham residents are served.
 - West Central Behavioral Health: Requested \$2,500. In 2015 they provided mental services to 50 residents including 16 children that total \$27,856 in un-reimbursable

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charitable care. The Board felt \$3,500 was an appropriate amount given what they do for our residents.

- Southwestern Community Services: Requested \$900. Provides shelter, heat and electrical assistance along with many other programs.
 - Lake Sunapee VNA: No request has been received. There was discussion on what they provide for services that isn't reimbursed by Medicare and other private insurance. The Board allocated \$2,000 until the VNA provides a letter and additional information on the programs they provide Grantham residents.
 - Chapin Senior Center and Council on Aging: Requested \$3,900. The Board requested additional information on the programs and services Grantham residents participate in.
 - Newport Food Pantry: White stated that she has never received a request for financial support from the Newport Food Pantry and stated Grantham residents use it in times of need. The Board requested additional information on how many Grantham residents they serve.
- Recreation budget was reviewed which includes a small stipend for those coaching our programs in grades 3 – 6. Selectman Brown stated that if a stipend is going to be paid to volunteers our Volunteer Service Agreement needs to be reviewed first.
 - Capital Reserve Funds:
 - Highway: \$50,000
 - Transfer Station: \$10,000
 - Library Building Repair: \$5,000
 - Town Buildings: \$5,000
 - Fire Department: \$20,000
 - Police Vehicle: \$10,000
 - Town Revaluation: \$10,000
 - Town Clerk Office Equipment: \$2,000
 - (New) Police Equipment (to include radios): \$5,000
 - Capital Expenditures:
 - Street Light Replacement: \$17,500
 - LED Lighting replacement for Town Hall, Transfer Station & Fire Station: \$41,845 less a 50% rebate from Eversource.
 - Highway Backhoe: \$110,000 - \$30,000 from trade-in; \$80,000 from Capital Reserves

Old Business 1:30pm:

1. Olde Farms Road Bridge: Chairman Kimball said they had read the memo from Erin Darrow of Right Angle Engineering which outlined her concerns of the guardrail and grading of the site. Engineer Erin Darrow said the guardrails and the grade of the road are her two biggest concerns. Darrow said that for safety, the guardrails are her biggest concerns; that she had met with Road Agent Hastings before Thanksgiving and they discussed taking out the terminal end sections which Hastings had done the week of November 30, 2015. Darrow said the issues were the height, the horizontal location, and the type of metal used for the guardrails was questionable. Darrow explained that Hastings removed the end units and positioned them, as best he could, to get them off

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the lane of travel as much as possible. Hastings said if he hadn't removed them that the wing from his plow truck would have hit them, had we had snow by now.

Darrow said that what contributed to the issue with the placement of the guardrail was the location of the road that Northwood's put in was over about eight feet (upstream) from where it was designed to be. Darrow said the bridge rail is a little further to the south and the road is a little further to the North; so it's the upstream side of the bridge that is most critical part where the guardrail is too close to the road. Darrow has a plan that shows where the guardrail used to be, where it was designed to be, and where it is located now.

Darrow summarized what has happened since:

The end sections have been replaced by Road Agent Hastings.

Pennyroyal Hill Surveying completed an as-built survey/plan but it doesn't include elevations and final grading so her (Darrow) observations on the grading are just that, not actual topography.

Darrow said the sides of the road were supposed to be sloped out more gradually with more fill and now the road dips and comes back up to bridge and then comes back down. The road was supposed to be one gradual, downhill approach to tie one end of the grade to the other. Darrow said the design was to bring the whole bridge out of the flood zone; that although it doesn't interfere with the grant, it doesn't meet the construction documents or design.

Jones asked if those two places of the road are higher than they were before. Darrow said they were about the same. Hastings said he had Northwoods cut the pavement further back (toward Route 10) so the approach has to be a little higher than before. White felt the new bridge provided better flood protection because it can handle more water than the old culverts that were there. Darrow agreed that there will be significantly less flooding there now.

Darrow felt it would have been better if the road had been built to her design, and said that it is awkward to have a hump as you approach the bridge. Chairman Kimball said the Selectmen accept the way the road is built because that area is one place they do not want traffic to be gaining speed. Darrow agreed that is one advantage of it; that it does act as a traffic calming measure.

Jones asked what the remedy would be. Darrow said the road is acceptable the way it is; that the chances of flooding are minimal and it fits in with the road characteristics as far as slowing traffic down. Darrow said the bend in the road is broader than it was designed to be but in order to get the road back to her design, the pavement would have to be removed, put in the base materials and redo that section of road. Jones said that would be cost prohibitive.

Referring to the discussion of flooding, Hastings said that water will cross something if it doesn't cross the bridge; that during Hurricane Irene, it flooded up

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to the underpass as well and felt that it would still flood by the underpass because that elevation didn't change. Darrow said that previously, part of the problem was the old culverts could not handle the water flow and now with the big arch, the hydraulic capacity has increased quite substantially with less obstruction where debris could build up and obstruct flow.

Darrow restated her concerns with the guardrails. Hastings asked what else she needed from the guardrail company in order to sign off on the project. Darrow said certification of the steel type, is it fabricated according to AASHTO requirements and that it is galvanized.

Darrow reviewed her design of the guardrail compared to the way it was installed. Darrow said the guardrails were shorter than her design and there was more of a point of need. The point of need being where the road drops off because there wasn't as much fill brought in to grade out the edges of the road. Darrow said the guardrail is shorter, partly because Hastings had to remove a push section (for safety reasons). Darrow said the grading of the shoulder and side slopes should be a three to four percent shoulder and it currently drops off sharply probably 3:1 or 2:1 and then they (Northwoods) didn't fill in on either side of the road to broaden off and decrease the point of need. Hastings felt that once the appropriate fill is put in that the guardrail height might be more appropriate. Darrow thought so too.

There was discussion on having a site meeting with Northwoods and the guardrail company to review exactly what needs to be done. Brown asked if the inconsistent spacing of the posts could only be resolved by removing some of them. Darrow said yes.

White informed that Beth Peck of HSEM has arranged for a site meeting with FEMA on January 12, 2016 at 11:00am, weather permitting, to close out the grant. White asked Darrow if she could attend as well. Darrow said yes. Brown, being a new Selectman and coming into this project toward the end, asked about coordination with all the different parties involved because what Darrow has said is that the bridge was built far off the mark from the design. Brown asked what the interval is on Darrow's construction observation and what role she had in watching the construction as they unfolded and is there an earlier time that they could have been caught. Brown also asked that when a design feature was changed what was in place for a procedure that Northwoods was supposed to follow; were they supposed to go to Darrow with a change order? Brown summarized his questions by asking how we got to this point in the project with all of these items that are way off and need to be fixed. Darrow said she had been providing periodic construction observations and during the bulk of the construction she was on the site frequently. Darrow said that Northwoods said in July they had a problem getting the guardrails and wouldn't have them until September and then it was October. Darrow said she had been working with Hastings to try to keep the costs down because the project was over budget; that Hastings had been the eyes ever since the project had been substantially completed in July. Darrow went on to say that communication

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deteriorated after that. Darrow said that although many discussions have been about what is wrong, overall there were a lot of things that have been done right too.

Brown asked if the side-slope grading should have been done at the time they installed the guardrails. Darrow said it should have happened earlier.

Brown stated that the Fire Chief had concerns about the installation of the dry hydrant. Darrow said that she was not notified when it was installed. Hastings said he still needed to talk to the Chief about the dry hydrant concerns. Kimball replied that the Fire Chief was concerned about the water level going below the pipe. Brown said the concern was with freezing. Darrow said it was supposed to be four feet down.

The Board stressed the importance of completing the remaining work by December 31, 2015. There was discussion about having a site meeting as soon as possible with Northwoods, the guardrail company and Darrow on Friday, December 18, 2015 or the following Tuesday. Darrow said Friday afternoon would work for her any time after 1pm.

White asked Darrow how long it would take her and what her time frame was to close out the project once the punch list items have been done. Darrow said she would get the final as built plan done pretty quickly, after Clayton does another survey that shows the guardrails.

2. Miller Pond Road Bridge: White asked the Board if they had a chance to look at the proposal from Daniels Construction. Kimball said yes; that he didn't have any concerns. Hastings said he would like to talk to them about the exposed concrete deck; that he was not sure that would be the best option for the town. Hastings said it's a matter of maintaining it, that it would have to be washed off once or twice per year. Putting a membrane down and paving over it would be a little more expensive. White said she had asked Barry Sleath from Daniels and he said probably not more than \$10,000. Jones asked why we wouldn't do it. Hasting said he didn't know if it was a way to better inspect the bridge (sight reasons), as well as maintenance. Hastings thought that if it had a membrane and was paved it would protect against deterioration better.

Brown asked how the exposed concrete would affect plowing. Hastings said it would have a flexible membrane on each end where it meets the pavement so it won't obstruct the plowing. Brown asked if over time if it would chip away at the concrete. Hastings said the concrete is treated, textured and has a water repellent coating. Hastings will follow-up with Sleath to find out what the advantages and disadvantages are.

Jones asked about the guardrail because the proposal contains a \$20,000 reduction if the Federal rail system is chosen versus the one approved by NH DOT. Hastings said the town does not have to go with the NH DOT specifications for the guardrails because this bridge is being funded by the town itself.

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White said there is a 14-day window to accept their proposal; that she would email Daniels for an extension through the next Selectmen's meeting on January 13, 2016.

Brown said one of the things discussed at the last meeting was making the acceptance contingent on a more detailed scope of work. Brown said there is a lot missing in the proposal that the town would want to have in the contract such as term, termination, penalties etc. Brown asked what process was used with the Olde Farms Road Bridge project. White said that when the town accepted the bid from Northwoods, then a contract was prepared, which they signed. Hastings said he thought that is what would happen with this proposal. Brown said there isn't anything in the proposal from Daniels saying that. Brown said he always likes to make sure everything is in the four corners of the document; that enforceability of a contract always turns on whether you have the key elements of enforceability of term, termination and a price term. Brown was concerned that if Daniels argued that they had a contract, they would be on solid footing. Brown felt there needed to be language in their proposal that it doesn't represent the contract; that a contract will be executed later, between the parties.

Hastings asked Brown if he looked at the proposal as a contract. Brown said no, that he looks at "How do I protect the town from someone else arguing that it's a contract".

Hastings said there is a lot more stuff that Daniels will need to provide such as shop drawings and other documentation etc.

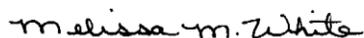
Brown will take a closer look at the proposal alongside the RFP and report back.

Other:

The professional services agreement from MRI was reviewed. A motion was made by Selectman Jones to accept the agreement, not to exceed \$5,000 and to authorize Town Administrator Melissa White to sign the contract on behalf of the Board. Second by Chairman Kimball. **Unanimously approved.**

The meeting ended at 4:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Melissa M. White
Town Administrator