

**TOWN OF ACWORTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**Selectmen**  
**Approved Minutes for Business Meeting of April 17, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Town Hall, 13 Town Hall Rd, Acworth, NH 03601**

**SELECT BOARD PRESENT:** Jim Jennison; Ray Leonard; Kathi Bradt

**STAFF PRESENT:** Charlotte Comeau, Town Administrator; Jennifer Bland, Hwy Admin. Assist.; Collin Crosby, Highway Foreman;

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Erin Darrow; William Desrosiers; Glenn Elsesser; Frank Emig; Torrey Greene; Steve & Lori Murray; Todd Porter; Joe Ruggiero; Gregg Thibodeau; Prescott Trafton; John Tuthill; Carole Wallace

**CALL TO ORDER:** Jim called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**FLOOD RESPONSE:**

- Erin state the lowest bid came from R&D Paving. They are not the lowest in tonnage but are the overall lowest cost. They have good references, would be able to do the job and do it in a timely manner. The contractors have until September 1<sup>st</sup> to complete the work. R&D said they could do it late June, early July.
- Kathi mentioned the 2 pots of money in the budget, \$200k for flood repair and \$300k for capital projects. She asked Gregg T to speak on the grant for Cold Pond Rd.
- Gregg said this is called a catalyst grant and the letter of intent is due Friday the 21<sup>st</sup>. The LOI is before the application. The grant pays 80% and town pays 20%. The award isn't until October 1<sup>st</sup> so the work would be done next year. We have to commit and show we have 20% of the cost which would be \$180-200k. They are looking to see who would be the best candidate.
- Kathi said this amount is based on the estimate received from Bazin Brothers of \$910k to do Cold Pond Rd in its entirety. There is an additional amount to replace some culverts. This 20% would come from the capital reserve amount. She also said we may not be invited to apply. This is just our letter to them asking for their money but they may not consider us a good candidate. We will know by early May whether our LOI is considered. Working with the grant writer who is funded by the county has been very helpful.
- Kathi said if we don't have the opportunity to apply for the grant that the town's money might be better spent on the drainage on Cold Pond Rd first with the money we have and then try and do something with the topcoat in the next construction season.
- Gregg said if we submit an application we will know by mid-June if it is accepted.
- Kathi said if we commit \$200k of the capital projects for this, we will have \$100k left. The Charlestown Rd bid is \$275K. If we take \$75k from the capital projects money and add it to the \$200 flood money we still have \$25,000. It is a good reason to go with the lower bid.
- Jim was leaning towards Bazin Brothers due to the good relationship, work they have done in the past and being local. Kathi said Bazin is at \$289k about \$15k more and that \$15k may be important. Erin has confidence in Bazin Brothers but their tonnage price is \$93.15 and R&D is \$89.70. At 2600 tons, that adds up to a significant amount of money when the town is on a tight budget.
- Kathi motioned that we go with R&D Paving who is the lowest bidder. Ray agreed with Jim saying we haven't dealt with R&D. Erin said R&D has high quality work. This is not a question of who will do a good job, the bottom line is the cost. Kathi said, going with a higher bidder then as a Board, they will have to be prepared to take money from other places in the budget in case the job goes over. If not prepared to do that, she recommended to go with the lowest bidder. After more discussion, the motion was seconded by Ray. ***The Board voted to accept the proposal from R&D. Motion passed 2-1 with Jim opposing.***
- Discussion on Derry Hill Rd on what is reimbursable. Erin said there was work on private property requested by the abutting landowners, including additional improvements for culvert and driveway work which are not eligible for reimbursement as FEMA doesn't reimburse for work done on private property. She presented a list of items and work that won't be covered. Erin said how it will impact us is a lower % of reimbursement from FEMA.

**GUEST:** The Board acknowledged Joe Ruggiero. Joe said he was there requesting to increase the price from \$98/ton to \$108/ton for C&D and MSW. On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to approve the increase. Motion passed.***

**MINUTES:** Meeting minutes of 4/3: on a motion by Jim, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to approve minutes as written. Motion passed.*** On a motion by Jim, seconded by Kathi; ***the Board voted to reverse their vote and not seal the NPS minutes from the last meeting. Motion passed.***

**BILL MANIFEST:** On a motion by Jim, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.***

**PAYROLL MANIFEST:** On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Jim; ***the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.***

## HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT:

- Collin said they have been cleaning ditches on Gove and Heino Rd.
- Crescent Lake is a mess; all ditches are filled and culverts are crushed. He asked about replacing the culverts. Ray said if they are existing, they should be able to replace them. Gregg said if any digging is done, we would need to apply for a shoreland permit.
- Still waiting on parts that are back ordered for the 5500.
- 550 went to Gendron's to look at the front end.
- Discussion about removing the posted road signs. On a motion by Jim, seconded by Ray; **the Board voted for the signs to be removed. Motion passed.**
- Discussion regarding summer hours M-Th from 6:30-4:30. On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; **the Board voted to approve the highway dept. return to summer hours. Motion passed 2-1 with Jim abstaining.**
- Todd P asked if we have a Road Agent. Jim said Collin is considered a working foreman. Todd asked if there is a reason Collin can't have the responsibility of RA and none was noted. He said he saw in the minutes there was a motion at the last meeting to make him a RA and never received a second, stating this is a disappointment to Collin. He asked the Board to give Collin a chance as he does a great job and, in his opinion, should be a RA. Ray agreed Collin is doing a great job. Todd re-emphasized Collin deserves a chance. This comment received an applause from the public. Kathi said this was on our agenda at the last meeting and she made the motion 2 weeks ago and made the motion again that the position be returned to the title RA as it was that before and should be now. Motion seconded by Ray; **the Board voted to approve Collin as the Road Agent. Motion passed 2-1 with Jim abstaining.** This was followed by another round of applause.

**PUBLIC:** More discussion on working with FEMA.

## ACTION ITEMS:

- Building Permits: Building permits: B&S Coursen M201 L122. Consensus was to wait on signing until there is a septic permit.
- Intent to Cuts: Bascom M233 L7, M233 L8, M244 L2, M242 L6; Miller M255 L2, M256 L4. On a motion by Jim, seconded by Kathi; **the Board voted to approve and sign the Bascom's intents. Motion passed.** On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Jim; **the Board voted to approve Miller's intent. Motion passed.**
- ConCom Appointments: On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Jim; **the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.**
- Vet Credit/Elderly Exemption Applications: On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Jim; **the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.**
- Letter to FEMA & HSEM on non-reimbursable costs: On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Jim. **The Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.** Prescott asked what this was about. Jennifer stated this was for some unsuitable material and labor on Crane Brook Rd put down by St Pierre that had to be taken out which we will not be reimbursed for. We have to submit the letter to FEMA so they can remove it from Crane Brook Rd. The amount is \$123,971.23. FEMA is now questioning all the roads where this material was placed. Lots of questions from the public on why we don't seek counsel. Jim stated we could but we just discovered that FEMA wouldn't cover this at the last meeting and hadn't determined an option yet. Kathi said when we had this conversation it was first in a NPS because we may be getting into legal situation or damaging someone's reputation. St Pierre is a neighbor and we've worked extensively with them over the years. She said it was helpful for the Board to hear the public's opinions. Carole said the Board has an obligation to the taxpayers and sees a lot of waste and excuses. Kathi responded by saying after the flood there were 29 roads that were closed and at the end of one year, they were all opened.
- Review exempt parcels report: On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Jim; **the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.**
- Exemption/Credit reports: On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Jim; **the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.**
- MS-232 Result of Votes of Budget: On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Jim; **the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.**
- Compliance:
  - W. Desrosiers M204 L4 (Black North Rd). Kathi mentioned he hadn't applied for a building permit and septic permit. and he has already moved a trailer onto the property. William said it's a job site trailer. William said he is working on the driveway and septic permit. Kathi asked about the damage to the road in front of the property. William said he flattened it down. The compliance officer said it is not a construction trailer but a mobile home like one would find in a trailer park. William presented a title and motor vehicle registration and said it is not a mobile home. The registration says travel camper. Kathi asked him to have all his permits in place before any action. She also asked him to keep in touch as we hadn't heard from him in response to the letters we sent.
  - Gove Rd. M211 L9. Jennifer said it's a mess, rubbish and trash everywhere. Kathi asked if it was a Health Officer issue. Jennifer said it would fall under RSA 127 and she is going there with the state police and will report back to the Board.
  - T. Morse. The locked gate and no trespassing sign are on a Class VI Rd. The Board asked Charlotte to send him a letter.
  - G. Demuro, no trespassing signs on the Class V Road. Kathi said they are inappropriate and he needs a letter too. Frank said Gerry had told him they are not signed so they're not valid. Kathi asked about the turn around. Jennifer said according to Collin, this is still fine.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Prouty property draft deed approval: Consensus was to approve the draft.
- Cost of hand rails for steps at front door of hall: Charlotte said there was money in the budget to cover this in building and maintenance. Consensus was to proceed with the hand rails.
- EOP and HM update: This needs to be updated. Jennifer said they've been talking about getting committees together this summer to proceed with this.

Jim wanted to know if there was any response to the house on Turkey Shoot Rd. Charlotte said the letter was returned and she is still looking into finding the owner.

Jim said Liz Bascom called him in regard to the upcoming rummage sale and asked if the Board would waive the fees if they had to throw some furniture away that didn't sell. On a motion by Jim, seconded by Kathi; ***the Board voted to waive the fees. Motion passed.*** Charlotte will let Charlie know.

On a motion by Kathi, seconded Jim; ***the Board voted to adjourn at 8:07 p.m. Motion passed.***

Respectfully submitted,



Charlotte Comeau  
Town Administrator