

TOWN OF ACWORTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Selectmen
Approved Minutes for Business Meeting of July 18, 2023 at 6:30 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; Collin Crosby, Road Agent; Jennifer Bland, Hwy Admin. Assist.
/EMD

OTHERS PRESENT: Gary Baber; Greg Bascom; Linda Christie; Rob DeValk; Glenn Elsesser; Peter Hawkes; Bill & Mary Hildreth; Claudia Istel; Melinda Loiselle; Mary & Bret Lord; Ted Marple; Steve & Lori Murray; Jim Neidert; Gregg Thibodeau; Prescott Trafton; Scott Travers; Bill & Sandy Trybulski; Robin Ungeheuer

CALL TO ORDER: Jim called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

FLOOD RESPONSE:

- Kathi said Executive Councilor, Cinde Warmington did contact FEMA. FEMA is now offering options. They're ready to push through the Charlestown Rd project which is a \$560k claim and will follow with the Crane Brook project which is \$1.1 million claim. The difference is they were trying to put through the projects complete. They stated that after talking to leadership, they can split the projects and pay on what has been done and pay on the paving once completed. Kathi said although they are submitting we are unsure how long it will be before receiving money as once approved by FEMA it then goes to the state who issues the check.
- In the FEMA/HSEM weekly meeting, Kathi asked about the process of getting the 5% from the state. They said there is still not a process for this.
- Kathi said we have \$295K in the budget originally for paving Charlestown Rd. This can't be done now with new damage so we could use it for the new flood repairs. If there is FEMA reimbursement, we could borrow up to \$750k for repairs.
- Jim said Cinde Warmington is trying to find out how to borrow interest free money from the state and will be back in touch Friday.
- Jenn and Collin met with three DOT Engineers today:
 - They toured Thayer Brook, the road by the store, Forest Rd and Crane Brook Rd. They estimated just those few roads the estimated amount to exceed 20 million dollars in damage.
 - For Crane Brook, they said there is no way that we should be getting permits on individual sites, we need permits for a new road and we need to hire an engineering firm that knows how to handle DES wetland and different avenues we need to take. Greg B was also there and said they had mentioned that we should be doing mitigation on Crane Brook to make it so this doesn't happen again. FEMA will only pay twice for a disaster for the same road.
 - They have concerns about the buildings across from the store. They don't want anyone in them because they've been undermined.
 - They are going to talk to someone about to get the brook back in its channel.
 - They have talked about shutting the store down, stating there is lead paint and septic going into the brook.
- Jennifer is meeting with Army Corp of Engineers tomorrow for permitting. She said the town would not be able to afford the Army Corp of Engineers. The DOT Engineers said we need the Governor to issue a disaster declaration and then they can send in the Army Corp of Engineers but it still wouldn't be cheap.
- Kathi suggested to contact NHDOT in Swanzey. Jennifer said the DOT engineers she spoke with are from Concord and the top Engineers they have on staff and due to the extensive damages is why they sent them. One specializes in FEMA reimbursement one in wetlands and H&H studies and one is experienced in disasters such as this. Jenn said they were very informative.
- Jennifer said we need to get DES out here and walk these roads. The DOT Engineers said that Crane Brook Road should be moved over 30 feet and there should be a stream going down one side of it with only a couple of culverts and not as many as we have now. On Thayer Brook they talked about a pinned retaining wall. Jennifer said we can't afford all

this, and we can't afford an Engineering firm we need. They came right out and said we can't use a "mom and pop" engineering firm, we need a larger firm that has multiple personnel and capabilities.

- Gregg T asked if there was a plan on how to proceed. Jennifer said in her opinion Crane Brook, Forest Rd and Thayer Brook should be first as there are a lot of moving components and we need to get these open.
- Mary H asked if Jennifer has heard anything about the Governor declaring a disaster declaration. Jennifer said there had been a meeting this morning and he was reluctant to do that and all of his focus is currently on Vermont.
- Greg B mentioned that he would like to get a temporary lane open on Crane Brook Rd so they can get trucks through that need to haul out manure.
- Jim N asked whether the engineers had the authority to say no one could go into the church or community aid building. Mary L said they told her they don't have the authority, they were only recommending this until the buildings have been inspected. Jennifer said there is also an issue with the propane tanks there. Gary will check them for safety.

MINUTES: Meeting of July 5, Emergency meeting of July 11, Public Hearing and meeting of July 13: On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; *the Board voted to approve the minutes. Motion passed.*

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

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

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT:

- Collin said they are working on Lynn Hill Rd with the dozer rental. Will be working on Forest Rd. after that, asked the Board if they want him to pick a road and work on it or does he have to ask the Board. Consensus was to work on any roads where people may still be stranded and ones that won't require any DES permitting.
- Jim asked Collin to put up some cones on areas by the sap tank on Derry Hill and the sign by Bascom Sugar house.
- Glenn mentioned that a culvert is plugged on Derry Hill.
- Jim said the culvert on his road that goes to Milliken Brook Rd is washing out worse. Recently 4-wheelers went down the road and made it worse. Discussion on what kind of signage can be posted for Class VI road. Highway has signs that say "not town maintained, travel at own risk". They will put up.
- Prescott mentioned that if Alstead's equipment is in the pit, Acworth could borrow it in order to save money on trucking. He also said that there are places to get temporary bridges that may work for Forest Rd. and will get the information to Collin.
- Steve M said there is a catch basin that has backed up twice on Crescent Lake Rd and asked if it was town maintained. Collin said the cistern is on private property so is the property owner's responsibility and it is plugged. The property is on 199 Crescent Lake Rd and owned by Mulhern. Charlotte will prepare letter to send.
- Jennifer said they are waiting for a disaster declaration from the Governor and there are enough damages to warrant this.
- Jennifer asked if the guys should continue the four 10-hour days or go to five days. Collin said they would prefer to work five 10 hour days for a bit in order to get caught up. Kathi said they have told Collin in the past that if he finds someone and he wants to take them on, to have them submit an application. Consensus was for them to work five 10-hour days for the next two weeks.
- Discussion on another quote for repairing Beryl Mtn. Bridge. Collin will reach out to Daniel's to meet. However, now that Forest Rd Bridge is ruined we shouldn't have this bridge down at the same time. We may need to use what bridge money we have to fix Forest Rd Bridge instead. Prescott will get some different options of designs to Collin.

PUBLIC: Gregg T spoke on the water quality effort that's being started by the conversation district concentrating on Crescent Lake and Crescent Lake's water shed.

Mary L asked what they can do to further the process of mitigation. Since the state put the bridge in they've been flooded out twice. The store and their property sustained substantial damage. They say that the damage was due to the last flood and the state would not issue a permit to dredge the brook so the channel is almost completely filled in so the water doesn't flow under the bridge. The water that came over the bridge this time was higher than it was before and if we have this weather pattern continue it's only going to get worse and our infrastructure will not continue to support the heavier

rainfall. Jennifer suggest to contact DOT. Mary said she spoke with DOT in the morning and they said it is not their jurisdiction even though the bridge is. Kathi recommended they start a list and have the towns people talk to various people to get help with this.

Claudia said because of the way the brook has changed, the Community Aid building is compromised and will need to be moved. Rob pointed out that if the building is moved the next barrier is the road.

Jim N asked how we get the attention of the people we need in order to help us. Suggestions were to write an article for the paper, contact news reporters and the Governor's office.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Building Permits: Travers M216 L9.3. On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.*** LeBlanc M201 L72. On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.*** Harris M232 L7. On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Jim; ***the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.***
- Abatement: Davis M242 L15. Per assessor, this was denied because there was no evidence submitted to indicate how much land was lost and or the property value affected. On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to approve and sign the denial with Jim opposing. Motion passed.***

DISCUSSION:

- Bank accounts: Town Counsel reviewed the sample agreement on the collateralization of our bank accounts and stated it looked fine. On a motion by Jim, seconded by Kathi; the ***Board voted to proceed.*** Melinda will contact the bank.

On a motion by Jim seconded by Kathi; ***the Board voted by roll call vote to enter into NPS pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) at 8:00 p.m. Motion passed.***

On a motion by Jim, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to exit NPS and reconvened public meeting at 8:15 p.m. Motion passed.***

On a motion by Jim, seconded Kathi; ***the Board voted to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. Motion passed.***

Respectfully submitted,
Charlotte Comeau, Town Administrator