

TOWN OF ACWORTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Selectmen
Approved Minutes for the Public Hearing of February 6, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
Relating to Borrowing in Excess of \$100,000
Town Hall, 13 Town Hall Rd, Acworth, NH 03601

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

STAFF PRESENT: Jennifer Bland, Hwy Admin Assist.; Charlotte Comeau, BOS Admin. Assist. Collin Crosby, Highway Foreman; Melinda Loisel, Treasurer

OTHERS PRESENT: Judy Aron; Greg Bascom; David Clark; Conan Cook; Erin Darrow, Engineer; Glenn Elsesser; Mark Girard; Torrey Greene; Claudia Istel; Ann Kosa; Brenda Melius; Lori & Steve Murray; Gregg Thibodeau; Prescott Trafton; Mike Trotta

CALL TO ORDER FOR PUBLIC HEARING: Jim called the public hearing to order at 6:00 p.m.

Kathi mentioned the purpose of the public hearing was to receive comments. Jim asked Erin to speak on the proposed projects for 2023 and then the hearing would be open to questions.

Erin stated they are looking at a number of factors as we prioritize projects. Which project we think we'll get the money back the quickest, what the town's budget is as well as permitting and design status.

The first project she discussed was doing the wearing course (topcoat) on Charlestown Rd. which would start at the Acworth/Charlestown town line and continue to the intersection of Black North Rd. which is 1.98 miles. The value was based on market values and a document DOT has which is a planning tool. She noted the cost of asphalt can be a wide range and she took the average. Most asphalt companies don't want to commit too far in advance because the amount they have to pay is based on the price of petroleum which fluctuates. She stated that she felt it would more than likely be under the projected amount of \$400k. She said that she would recommend getting an RFP out around Feb. 20th and have a two week time frame for the proposals. We could have the numbers before town meeting. This work would complete the project.

The second project discussed was Crane Brook Rd. for road surface & drainage maintenance with an amount of \$100k. She stated we would know more about this after spring and maybe there would be less work needed. The paving wouldn't take place until 2024.

The third project discussed was Forest Rd. The estimate is \$150k for the ditching and \$250k for the culverts. This involves 13 culverts that vary in size at an average of \$20k per culvert. The reclaim & Temp. Surface/Drainage was estimated at \$225k. She said the reclaim and surface would be a 12" reclaim, some fabric in the wet areas and 6" of gravel, and this year 3" of reclaimed asphalt and that would be in place until probably 2025. The plan is to improve the drainage, get the ditching done, replace the culverts and let the road settle; in the mean time we would be reimbursed from FEMA then we could do the paving.

Erin stated that when these projects go out to bid there should be a contingency about the funding approval at town meeting.

Engineering has \$50k for site surveys that are needed for projects that need to be finished up. Sam Putnum, Nye Rd and several others need surveys. This is for documentation to FEMA, mitigation process and permits for DES. \$75k is for engineering which is working on the RFPs, permits, and FEMA meetings which meet at least once a week.

Gregg T asked how many roads have been brought up to pre-flood status to date and how many roads will be brought up to pre-flood with the work for this year. Erin would have to put that information together.

Brenda asked if FEMA was going to reimburse for the entire 2 miles topcoat on Charlestown Rd. Erin stated that based on the information that was measured and the site inspections conducted by FEMA we are following their recommendations. In addition, because the town doesn't have a road standard, we are defaulting to DOT standards. Brenda asked if we have this in writing, Kathi stated this is in FEMA's field notes that FEMA records as they are walking the road during the site visit. Erin stated we work through different documentation to receive reimbursement from FEMA and one is called DDD's which has this site listed and part of what is required for reimbursement.

Glenn asked about the culvert on Luther Hill, if this is part of this year's plan to replace. Erin stated that this is a separate project and we are just looking at Charlestown Rd. for now.

Steve M. asked how much more is needed in repairs to address the flood. Kathi stated we have been discussing in the meetings between 7-10 million dollars and this is a long process. We could be in this position of taking out notes every year for a number of years.

Prescott asked when FEMA shut off date is. Kathi stated initially we were told we have two 18 month extension periods and last week they said they will stay with the town until we are brought back to pre-disaster condition. This does not include mitigation.

Prescott stated that the state has a bulk amount of reclaimed asphalt that could cut costs down. Erin will look into this.

Judy said she has been in touch with the Governor's office to see if they can move things along. They passed SB 409 last year which allows towns to take out disaster loans from the state which would be interest free and possibly forgiven. The state is still in process of making rules on how towns can apply for the funds. She will meet with the Governor to see where we are with this. We may even be able to get the 2.1 million in order to pay back Mascoma Bank.

Glenn asked if the maintenance Erin proposed to put more millings down on Crane Brook Rd would be covered by FEMA or the town's maintenance. Erin said this has been discussed with FEMA and anticipates it will be covered by them. However, she did state Prescott made a good point about getting everything in writing. There was further discussion on the material used on Crane Brook Rd.

Kathi reminded folks that the purpose of the meeting was to get feedback about a loan. She said she is struggling whether to recommend or not recommend the loan and would like to know what people think.

Glenn thought that scaling down would be better. He also asked about the two open contracts #14 and #15. Kathi stated these have been suspended.

Prescott mentioned to proceed with caution since we don't know what we are going to get from FEMA.

Brenda stated that if we don't borrow a little more there will be no way we can line up contractors to do work this summer as it is unknown when we will receive FEMA reimbursement.

Based on the overall feedback, there was support for continuing repairs at a reduced loan amount request for the article.

On a motion by Jim seconded by Kathi; ***the Board voted to adjourn the public hearing at 7:19 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,



Charlotte Comeau
Administrative Assistant