

TOWN OF ACWORTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Selectmen
Approved Minutes for Business Meeting of July 5, 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.

OTHERS PRESENT: Greg Bascom; Linda Christie; Rob Devalk; Frank Emig; Mark Goodwin; Torrey Greene; Bill & Mary Hildreth; Ray LaClair; Lori & Steve Murray; Gregg Thibodeau; Robin Ungeheuer; Carole Wallace

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

FLOOD RESPONSE: Focusing now on the Charlestown Rd. Dealing with another new person from FEMA.

MINUTES: Meeting minutes and NPS of 6/19: 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 Jim; ***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:

- Work report/work plan: They have been working on some washouts from all the rain we've had.
 - Kathi asked about the weight limit on Forest Rd. Collin asked the Engineer if they could post 10 tons rather than 6 tons that was recommended. He hasn't heard back. Consensus was for Charlotte to reach out to the Engineer.
 - Torrey talked about repairing the pot holes on Allen Rd. Collin said they plan to bring the grader out there and fix them.
- Beryl Mtn. Rd Bridge: Reviewed the quote from Renaud Bros. to repair the bridge in the amount of \$88,600. Collin said they told him it was past sounding. There is about \$65k which was received from the state for bridge work. Charlotte will look into how much is available in the bridge capital reserve fund as well as reach out to Daniel's again for another quote.
- Continental Paving contract for River Rd: On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.***

PUBLIC: None

ACTION ITEMS:

- Building Permits: C Noonan M222 LS. On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.*** M Elsesser M253 L3. On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.***
- Intent to Cut: Bruce Bascom M243 L3. On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to approve and sign. Motion passed.***
- Vote on decision regarding Small Roads Team: Gregg gave an update of one change on page 9 of the final report. Kathi stated that based on the last meeting there were a lot of different ideas of what is needed to go into a motion. There was a draft in their packets that she read out loud. On a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray; ***the Board voted to accept the findings of the Small Roads Team established in 2022 which showed that reclassification of the roads considered would not result in significant highway maintenance cost savings and could result in a liability to the Town by affected property owners seeking restitution of lot property value, and to keep on file the extensive research provided by the Team as a public record for future reference, and to abandon any effort to reclassify the roads considered.*** After some discussion, on a motion by Kathi, seconded by Ray ***this was amended to add "at this time" to the end of the motion. Motion as amended passed with Jim recusing himself due to conflict of interest as the property he lives at that his wife owns is on one of the roads.***

DISCUSSION:

Small Roads Additional Recommendations: Kathi mentioned that a lot of these recommendations have to do with Collin regarding safety.

- Gregg read the following recommendations:
 - 1 Continue to address landowners preventing access to Class VI roads. Recommend BoS restate the rules regarding Class VI roads; consider issuing fines.
 - 2 BoS consider a winter parking ban fine for all roads maintained by the town.
 - 3 Consider a fine for blocking emergency and maintenance vehicles adequate right of way (ROW).
 - 4 Work with the Road Agent to identify roads that do not have adequate ROW turnarounds; establish turnarounds for those roads.
 - 5 Planning board, BoS and Road Agent should adopt a DOT based set of road standards to enable road and highway crew planning, budget planning and set expectations for public safety. Utilize these standards for all future efforts and address at a minimum, culverts, road materials, road treatments, headwalls, dissaptors, ditches and shoulders for both gravel and paved roads. (NOTE: This is NOT a recommendation that all current roads be brought to DOT standards.)
 - 6 Ensure the state produced road map accurately represents the correct road classifications.
 - 7 Assist the Ungeheuer's with their effort to negotiate with their neighbors; Select Board or Road Agent should be involved due to the dangerous traffic flow considerations.
 - 8 Work with the Russell property owners to reclassify their road to a private road; Property owners will engage BoS summer of 2023.
 - 9 Prioritize all the town maintained Class V roads based on # of residences and traffic volume. Road .Agent to use this prioritization for all road maintenance and improvements.
 - 10 Address that fact that Coffin Hill and Langdon were legally classified in the 1978 Master Plan as Class VI roads, which prohibits town maintenance on those roads. The team found no other classification in a town document stating otherwise.
 - 11 Highway crew track their hours worked on each road. This will provide better data to enable cost analysis and cost reductions in the future.
 - Collin said he has no problem speaking with landowners if there are problems with the roads or ROWs rather than getting everyone involved.
 - Jennifer said she has road files and since January she has been keeping track of everything that is done on each road. Including when the crew is out there, for how long, what was done, and any material used. It then goes in the road file.
 - Kathi mentioned that number 7 and 8 which has to deal with property owners and recommended they talk to the office so the board can help them in whatever direction they need. Robin Ungeheuer stated they have been in discussion with their neighbor and briefly described this. Kathi mentioned that this goes to show that this needs to be dealt with between the parties involved.
 - Kathi would like to know if surrounding towns have adopted their own standards or do they use DOT standards.
 - Discussion on number 6 and 10. Kathi thought we should check with DOT. When she looked at the Master Plan and read the narrative, it was clear that DOT has the legal information and were very careful at depicting DOTs information. She thinks we should ask DOT to figure this out for them.
 - Jim wants to see the map showing Coffin Hill and Langdon Rd being legally classified as Class VI roads.
- Secure bank accounts: Still waiting for an opinion from town counsel.
- 5 town fuel discount contract: Acworth signed up with Alstead, Walpole, Langdon and Charlestown for the purchase of diesel, fuel oil and propane.
- Culvert/drainage issues on private property: Discussion on a plugged culvert on private property on Crescent Lake Rd. Collin took care of this and has spoken with the property owner to let them know this is their responsibility.

On a motion by Kathi, seconded Jim; ***the Board voted to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Motion passed.***

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte Comeau, Town Administrator