

# September 17, 2012

Chairman Michael Jackson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

## **Present:**

Members: Barbara Brown, Gary Fitzherbert, Michael Jackson, Craig Schoon

Alternates: Arthur J. Dubois, Ted Bent

Selectman: Mark Lyon, Tony Bedini, Richard Carey

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

Guests: Kevin Smith, Highway Director

## **Appointment of Alternate:**

Alternate A.J. Dubois was seated as a Regular Member for the meeting.

## **Minutes:**

Minutes of the July meeting were approved with the amended spelling of Town "Council" to Town "Counsel" on page 2. (Thanks, Tony!)

## **Education Report:**

### Long Range Plan:

First Selectman Mark Lyon reported he had met with Pat Cosentino, Reg'n. #12 Sup't., Bob Giesen, Region 12 Business Manager, Gary Lord, Finance Chair from Roxbury and several Board of Ed members regarding the Region's long-term plans. They will meet again on September 25th.

### School Buildings:

Tony Bedini, Selectman and Board of Education member, reported that a long list of repairs had been completed this summer at the Regional schools. Among these items: a new roof is being prepared for a section of the Washington Primary School over the cafeteria, approximately 90 ft. of the mansard roof at the middle-high school is in need of repair and will be much more costly than anticipated, and a sump pump will be installed under the WPS gym.

## **Highway Department:**

Highway Foreman Kevin Smith presented Schedules for Road Repairs, Bridge Repairs and Vehicle & Machinery Replacement and Maintenance. These included the condition of the roads, length, condition, required repairs, and estimated costs. Currently there are approximately thirty miles of dirt roads, of which 50% of which are considered "scenic roads." Annual cost for maintenance of dirt roads, not including washouts and major repairs, is approximately \$15,000/mile. For the remaining sixty miles of paved roads, initial paving costs, not including drainage or widening, approximate \$250,000/mile. Kevin noted the continued maintenance of dirt roads is costly and requires much more work than roads that have been paved. This time takes away from the maintenance of the other roads in town. Drainage work and road improvements are vital to keeping ahead of this program.

The Town has allocated funds over the past five years for road maintenance. Funds have been budgeted to address those roads that are in most need for immediate repair. The roads for this year include River Road, Calhoun Street and Fenn Hill Road, which are in shovel-ready condition. This is in addition to regular road upkeep and maintenance. The Board discussed in detail the importance of continuing this long-range planning, as well as the budgeting of Town funds and use of anticipated grants. It was hoped the Town will be able to continue this important purpose for future years.

Kevin reported a long list of repairs has been completed this summer, again using the Town's long-range budgeting. He noted while the Town is not required to meet federal road construction standards, we do comply with state specifications with regard to winter maintenance, sight lines, curvature, etc.

#### Highway Garage Replacement:

Mark Lyon reported preliminary plans for a new Highway Garage will be presented by Lenard Engineering to the Zoning Board of Appeals this week for final approval. Plans include attaching the new garage to the existing garage. This will allow the Town to store materials in the foundation of the demolished garage, rather than at Town's Titus Road site. Mark noted Local Capital Improvement Program (LOCIP) grant funds are available for this project to offset costs and will be discussed further. An alarm system has been installed in the current garage and will also be installed in the new building. It is intended to also install sprinkler systems, which may require tanks as there is not a municipal water supply at the site. Town Garage policies have been discussed, new trucks with sanders and plows have been ordered, and one truck has been received. The Town is looking ahead. The alarm system will make a big difference and early detection is key.

Gary Fitzherbert noted that the Selectmen are well aware of the projects ahead as they have been participating on a daily basis. While this was a tragedy, they have improved almost every aspect of the functioning of it. All personnel are doing a phenomenal job and he felt the Town will end up in a very good place.

#### **Trees:**

Kevin Smith reported another major Town concern should be trees. We are in a unique area as compared to others. e.g. FEMA recognizes this area as being unique due to the number of tree we have, many of which are in the Town's right-of-way on the roads. Many ash and elm trees are very big and have lived beyond their life cycles. They are dangerous and he did not feel the tree budget is adequate for the work that needs to be done.

#### **Town Hall Propane Explosion:**

The recent propane explosion at the town hall was also discussed. The Town's insurance company, CIRMA, has hired JP Maguire for demolition and removal of materials, which is currently happening. An RFP for a new heating plant has been issued. The main windows in the Town Hall auditorium, in addition to flooring, walls, etc., are being inspected and, in some instances, removed. Full window replacement has been recommended. Mark reported he had met with Bryan Memorial Trust trustees, who have also expressed their concerns and offered assistance. Many questions remain and are arriving daily. It was agreed funding would be necessary for "up-front"

costs, including engineering, electrical and planning, as well as some contribution toward the immediate heating plan. The windows may not be replaced immediately and are covered with wood for the time being. It is anticipated the Town will receive the same excellent assistance from CIRMA as has been received during the town garage event.

Michael Jackson made a motion that an ex-budget appropriation for \$20,000 be approved to cover costs resulting from this occurrence.

Craig Schoon seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously passed.

### **Legal Litigation Fund:**

Payment for the final settlement of an land use enforcement matter has been received. The Board unanimously agreed to deposit these funds in the Legal Litigation Fund to offset expenses from this case. Discussion continued regarding these legal costs as well as employee time spent certifying all written matters due to litigation. While the Town may charge an applicant for the attendance of an attorney at a public hearing and for reproducing materials, the Town is not permitted to recoup other litigation expenses unless they result from a frivolous lawsuit.

### **Town Picnic to Honor Volunteer Emergency Personnel:**

Linda McGarr reminded the Board that a special picnic will be held on Saturday, 9/22 at the Pavilion by the Recreation Commission to thank and honor our emergency volunteers. Everyone is invited to join in this appreciation. Please bring a side dish.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Gollow, Finance Secretary

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

[Road Repair Schedule](#)

[Bridge Repair Schedule](#)

[Machinery & equipment Schedule](#)