

Selectmen's minutes of meeting Dec. 3, 2018

Members present: Mark Newman, Brian O'Rourke, George Riley, Fred Ventresco
Dolores Harasyko, Admin. Asst.

Called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes reviewed and signed

Tom Nadolny and Nicholas DellaGiustina in representing the Farmington River School to discuss the road conditions and the process of call ins for delayed opening or school closings. Mark will not respond as selectmen but will address the roads as the interim road superintendent. Tom stated that the last couple of storms he has had complaints from parents, bus drivers and Dufour, the bus company. He needs to know by 5 a.m. what the conditions of the roads will be, whether to delay to opening or close the schools. Nick responded that he believes the plows didn't hit Route 57 until 6:30 a.m. He stated that they need a phone call by 5 a.m. George asked about their experience in past years, Tom responded that the communication was awful. Brian addressed the routes, which roads are the problem. He stated that the roads were actually better than last year. Nick said that Clark and Sears to Route 57 were not plowed last Monday. Mark responded that they actually started plowing at 4 a.m. and that the roads were indeed plowed. George pointed out that the storm on Monday lingered on throughout the day and got progressively worse. Mark stated that it takes about an hour and a half to do the route and they continually plow so that if Nick was on the road at 6:30 a.m. they had already plowed at least once before. Discussed cell service, it is non existent in some areas of town. Brian reiterated that the communication will be much better this year. Mark reviewed the new process they are using this year, they are pre treating ahead of the storms which is proving to be very successful. Brian asked the school members to identify the exact areas of the problems. Tom explained that the bus company would like larger areas for turning around. Brian explained that the dirt roads are a muddy mess right now and will improve once they freeze up. They cannot plow to the edges of the dirt roads or create larger areas for turnarounds as they will create more of a mess. They will set up a meeting with the new road superintendent to review the protocol and time schedule to call the school during bad weather.

Alex Bowman in to discuss a garage on 117 New Hartford Road. He would like a stop work order issued by the Board of Selectmen. Roger Kohler from the Planning Board present, they reviewed the plans and sent the property owner to the building inspector because setbacks were unclear. Discussed the grandfather clause. The homeowner contacted the building inspector who did a site visit. The homeowner was able to show photos and they ran a string to show where the non conforming pre existing foundation was. The response from the building inspector was that he would issue the permit to allow the building to be rebuilt in the same area. The new building uses the same square footage, they did turn the building but it does not change the setback, it is also one bay less than the previous building. They are not encroaching on the set backs. George reiterated that the new building is no closer to the road than the pre existing one. Dolores reviewed the process for a special permit hearing. She explained that it starts with the planning board, if they deny it they go to the building inspector, if they deny it they then go to the zoning board of appeals, if they deny it they then go to the select board to request a special permit. In this case the building inspector

made a site visit and determined that no further action was needed and issued the building permit. Alex asked the selectmen to override the building inspector, they responded that they do not have the authority to override the building inspector. Ron Pachulski stated that this discussion should not go further without the homeowners of 117 New Hartford Road present. Mark responded that we have nothing to vote on and stands by the building inspectors decision.

Discussed the land acquisition offer from the State regarding two small easements to the pipeline. Motion by Brian, second by Mark, all in favor to reject the offer.

Discussed the selectmen's operating budgets. Motion by George, second by Brian, passed unanimously to provisionally accept their budgets subject to final review.

Highway department updates:

Mark reviewed that it has been a very busy week. We have had several snow events. They went out and pre treaded. One storm went on for 72 hours. The dirt roads remain a struggle as they have not frozen yet. They spread gravel and will continue to spread gravel as the weather allows. Barbara Cormier stated that this is the first time in a long time she has seen Route 183 clear after a storm. Bogart Muller asked on behalf of the Arts Center if they could have permission to paint the old v plow in front of the garage. Mark stated that we are not at that point yet and it is winter and too cold to paint. They appreciate the offer and asked if the Arts Center could come up with some drawings.

Mark announced that they have offered the Road Superintendent position to Brad Curry, and he has accepted. He should be available in two weeks to start. They will vote on his appointment at next weeks meeting. Mark will continue as interim superintendent until Brad gets acclimated.

Selectmen's updates:

Brian and George are attending a meeting tomorrow with Crocker and members of the Broadband Institute to discuss the action plan and moving forward.

Brian provided a review of the Five Town Coalition meeting held last week in Tolland. They met with an engineering firm to discuss the culverts, bridges and stream crossings for all 5 towns. They are willing to work on an estimate for free. They will work on a 10 year plan for Route 57. The estimated cost for doing a full depth reclamation excluding the engineering costs is 3 ½ million per mile. Discussed the difficulty for emergency vehicles responding to calls due to the deteriorated conditions of Route 57.

Discussed a budget workshop schedule. Dolores suggested having a standing meeting every week until the deadline. All agreed. We will have work sessions on Dec. 6 at 9 a.m., Dec. 12 at 2 p.m. and Dec. 19 at 2 p.m.

Town Administrator updates:

Fred reviewed the Dodd Road culvert. He has sent out 2 letters with no response. Mark wants to write a citation to the home owner. Brian and George agreed to remove the crushed culvert and create a ditch in its place to divert the water off the road. Fred will forward a letter to the homeowner stating the work to be done and that they will be getting billed for the work.

There will not be a selectmen's meeting on Dec. 24 or Dec. 31, we will meet on Wednesday Jan. 2, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

Discussed the letter to FERC regarding Cold Spring Road. George will work with Fred to compose the letter.

Mail reviewed

Warrants reviewed and signed

Brenda Larson asked about the berm by her house, Mark responded that the asphalt plants are closed and they will get to it in the spring.

Barbara Cormier stated that after she read the article about the former road superintendent she spoke with former selectmen John Skrip. Our equipment was indeed used at John Skrips and Ralph Morrisons properties, she as a taxpayer wants our money recouped. Brian responded that the article wasn't completely clear. The asphalt and trucking was never actually paid by the town because the invoices were intercepted. The intent was clear to bill the town but the town did not pay them. When Ralphs driveway was done P & R paid the bills. There was falsification of time however that the town did pay. In order for the town to seek further legal recourse we would have had to kept the former road superintendent on the payroll for 8 to 12 months until the claim was settled. The actual cost of the theft that could be proven was a misdemeanor amount of \$5,000. We would not have been able to hire a new road superintendent until the claim was settled. The selectmen agreed it was in the best interest of the town to end this problem as soon as possible and with out more cost to the town. Ralph Morrison responded that he is the one that called Brian when the former road superintendent showed up on his property to do his driveway using town equipment.

Nina Carr commended the selectmen for the pest control however she had to clean up mouse droppings for ½ hour before her playgroup and would like some attention given to the cleaning. Discussed trash pickup, no one from the senior tax workoff has come forward to do this job. The highway department will pick up once a week.

Meeting adjourned at 8:0 p.m.

Mark Newman

Brian O'Rourke

George Riley