

Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, November 15, 2021

Chairman Leslie Babb called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Present were Selectmen Leslie Babb, Ernie Day, and Melissa Florio, and Ellen White, Town Administrator, who recorded these minutes. This meeting was held at the Town Hall.

Also, present were William Taylor, Gary Williams, Jamie Mullen, Bill Lambert, Tom & Suzanne Perkins, Don and Janet Johnson, Bill Elliott, Scott Brooks, Darwin Moulton, Barbara Hall-Siktberg, Mark McConkey, Anne Cunningham, and an unidentified gentleman.

Non-Public Session:

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 6:00 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (l) for legal. Melissa seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Les-yes, Melissa-yes, Ernie-yes. All in favor the motion passed. Les made a motion to reconvene public session at 6:25- PM. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Appointments:

Les introduced Bill Lambert of NH DOT present for discussion on Route 153 concerns and announced that the topic was not noticed as a public hearing but would allow as much time as possible to discuss any concerns.

Melissa discussed the growth of tourism and the impact on the town requiring an increase in safety checks and life safety concerns. Concern with the rates of speed traveled on the curvy road especially with large trucks crossing over the center lines, passing zones welcoming increased speed into the intersection of Bennett and Cushing Corner Roads, increased need for police presence to monitor a very busy route which should not be the main focus of an already small police department. She welcomes ideas and solutions to deal with the impact.

Les stated the well-noted detour signage on Route 16 for the twin bridge reconstruction in Ossipee and road work in Conway Village has created a new route, and now navigation systems have located this route as a quicker route. He then discussed a camp he has purchased up north to allow time for his wife to commute to her job at the hospital because with increased traffic, stop signs added in Eaton, and the route being used a bypass, it is no longer an effective commuting route. Tractor trailers are noted to crowd the lanes especially on the s-curves. Is there still a plan to bypass Eaton and the s-curves? Or to correct known concerns with the route?

Chief Mullen stated there is a definitely an increase in the volume of traffic.

Bill Lambert responded that the increase of traffic on Route 153 is noted from Wakefield up to Conway. Traffic data collected is of average normal daily travel, not necessarily focused on seasonal or weekend travel. Traffic cannot be redirected away from the route. It is scenic and used to be taken as a scenic route north but now used as a more direct route to destinations. Similar roads are posted at 30 MPH in urban areas, 35 MPH in rural, and 55 MPH elsewhere. If a tractor trailer can make its way around a roundabout, it should also be able to navigate the s-curves without crossing over into the other lane if traveling at the posted rate of speed. A plan to create a bypass in the area of Purity Spring Resort is out there with land acquired but would require area town participation to prioritize it in the 10-year plan. Electric signs providing traffic feedback have been noted as effective but mainly

in areas where there is a reduction of speed. Ernie questioned if NH DOT will subsidize the cost of the signs. Bill responded that those signs as well as the illuminated pedestrian crossing signs are in demand but not necessarily available. As a traffic engineer, the complaints are routine; drivers are more aggressive and less attentive. The pandemic has brought more people seeking more remote recreational areas with less crowding than urban areas. He can review the option of eliminating the passing zone-cross switch as they are dependent on appropriate site distance.

Mark McConkey stated that similar issues were discussed in Effingham 2-weeks ago. The planning commission can aid with traffic counts but the cost is to be borne on the towns. What is the consistency? Increase in volume? There is a differentiation between the speeds coming onto 153 from Route 25. Data can be used so towns may designate area to make some modifications that work maybe as a potential PILOT project?

Bill responded that there are presently 60 count locations running 24/7 across the state and are rotated every three-years. He is unsure why the regional planning commission is stating the traffic data is not available. Normally a town will request a road safety audit and seek assistance from regional planning. Recurring crash history normally triggers this process. NH DOT cannot control the data provided in the vehicle navigation systems and often times they redirect down inaccessible roads. The solution is to get people to use roads as they are intended.

Les discussed the accident in Wakefield at Stoneham Road where a study was completed and opened up opportunities for federal money. He would like to be proactive before an accident, potentially severe, dictates a change. Data from the study showed 45% of traffic on Route 16 travels at 75 MPH.

Bill stated specialized studies completed and reported as of July 2020 show average rates of speed of 49 MPG in 35 MPG zone with 75% traveling at over 50 MPH.

Les stated it is in the stated due diligence to improve the road, but when? Bill responded that it needs to be incorporated into the 10-year plan starting at the regional planning level. Discussion on target speed versus design speed.

Darwin Moulton discussed the intersection at Bennett and Cushing Corner Road where motorcycles take advantage of the passing zone heading north but are still in the passing zone thru the intersection. A death at the intersection was reported from a few years ago. Darwin noted a school bus sign is needed in the vicinity of his house for new neighbors with school-age children. He also expressed concern with the site distance issues in the area, traffic will not have much time to react to a stopped school bus at this location. Bill added that the challenge with signs is that they will not stop traffic.

Barbara Hall-Siktberg purchased her family home on Route 153 and is in the process of moving here full-time. She discussed the increase in traffic and speed this summer in addition to the noise from traffic coming over the bridge from Route 25. It is an easy area to pick up speed with the flow of the road and people forget there are house and people that live there. A traffic study may show reason for change.

Les reported a recent count of 50 cars from Ossipee Lake Road to Route 153 with 80% being from out of state.

Barbara Buesser, a resident on Route 153, stated she has noticed an increase in the past 7-years since she moved here, both in speed and volume. Volume increases Thursday-Sunday. A study completed on volume in the months of May-September would show this and maybe something can be done. Barbara clarified that it is a state road. Confirmed.

Les stated 53' trailers were not allowed and questioned why they are no? Bill responded that it is a DMV issue. Mark will look into this.

Darwin stated that Route 153 is not an appropriate location to hold a bike/run marathon.

Bill stated there is an option is to increase the speed limit to 45 MPH as feasible and safe. This action was taken by Wakefield Police Chief Fifield to address their section of the route. Jamie disagrees with this approach as it is ineffective and conviction is impossible at 5 over.

Review of Mail, Sign Manifests, Approval of Minutes

The accounts payable and payroll manifests were reviewed as well as the red folder containing correspondence.

Ernie made a motion to approve the minutes from the Non-Public Session held on 10/25/2021 and the Selectmen's Meeting and Non-Public Sessions held on 11/1/2021. Melissa seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Department Head Updates

Highway Department – Road Agent Scott Brooks reporting road graveling continues. A blower rented from Coleman's was beneficial in cleaning off roads and ditches. Haverhill Street, Pauli Point and Huckins have been graveled. Cold Brook Road was worse than West Bay and received the attention it needed. 12' of culvert is necessary to be replaced over the next year along with other drainage structures to be purchased from remaining summer highway funds. Test boings will be completed on Durgin Hill today-tomorrow. A new quote has been received for the salt shed including a 25' lean-to for the storage of the grader, broom and chipper. Timeframe is unknown. The Mack has a scheduled build date of April. The salesperson has left the company and the new one has called to review the specifications. Scott is expecting an increase in the cost originally estimated at \$134,000. The International is back at Advanced Diesel. The VPN filter has been replaced and another is plugged, awaiting parts for repair.

Town Office – Administrator Ellen White reported Administrative Assistant Stacy Bolduc attend the NHGFOA 2-day conference and they have been working compiling information for and fulfilling several 91-A requests that have been received.

Police Department – Chief Jamie Mullen reported several right-to-know requests received including inquiries on call volume related to short-term rentals. Comments have been received on Officer Diaz's professionalism. Sgt. Laferriere has been doing a great job handling cases in court. Irwin is not responding to any calls regarding the new cruiser so Jamie is now seeking a Durango through Crest. More information will be available when he has it.

Public Comment

Darwin stated that in regard to short-term rentals, he shares concern with the occupancy numbers of rental homes being offered in relation to their septic capacity. Properties on the Ossipee side of the lake were noted to have experienced septic issues. He questioned if a commercial dumpster will be required for short-term rentals to lessen the load on the Transfer Station staff. These questions along with others are to be addressed in the upcoming Public Hearings.

Non-Public Session(s)

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 7:32 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (e) for legal. Melissa seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Les-yes, Melissa-yes, Ernie-yes. All in favor the motion passed. Les made a motion to reconvene public session at 7:58 PM. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 7:58 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (l) for legal. Ernie seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Les-yes, Melissa-yes, Ernie-yes. All in favor the motion passed. Les made a motion to reconvene public session at 8:05 PM. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 8:06 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) for personnel. Melissa seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Les-yes, Melissa-yes, Ernie-yes. All in favor the motion passed. Les made a motion to reconvene public session at 8:24 PM. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 8:24 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (e) for legal. Melissa seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Les-yes, Melissa-yes, Ernie-yes. All in favor the motion passed. Les made a motion to reconvene public session at 8:36 PM. Melissa seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Old/New Business/Discussion

Melissa reported that she and George Stone met with a representative from Casella last Wednesday at the Transfer Station. The representative provided a lot of information on their recycling program, discussed the current contract and renewal, changes in hauling state-to-state, MRF's (multi re-use facility) site potentials for NH, fees calculations, and signage options available. Recommendations included eliminating the acceptance of construction debris and waste oils.

Melissa reported the Forest Advisory Committee was absent a quorum again this month. General discussion took place. It was noted that 2 locks on the Madison gate in the Town Forest were broken.

Consent Agenda

Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting Non-Public Session – 10/25/2021	Approved
Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting & Non-Public Sessions (2) – 11/1/2021	Approved
Accounts Payable – Weeks ending 11/5/21 & 11/12/21	Approved
Payroll Manifest – Week ending 11/3/21 & 11/10/21	Approved
Petition & Pole License – Abenaki Drive	Approved
Letter of Appointment – Melissa Florio to Comm District Planning Committee	Approved

Letter of Appointment – Joyce Watson to Deputy Treasurer	Approved
Proposal – GW Brooks re: Septic line excavation and repair	Approved
2021 Municipal Assessment Data Certificate	Approved
Annual Assessing Services Contract - 2022-2026	Approved

Correspondence

Public Notice – Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Meeting – 11/30/2021	Reviewed
E-Mail – Barbara Hall-Siktberg re: Short-term rentals	Reviewed
E-Mail – Rick Hiland re: Communications District Planning Committee	Reviewed
E-Mail – Willie Farnum re: Transfer Station Improvement Committee (Tamworth)	Reviewed
Report – Facilities Update – 11/15/2021	Reviewed
Report – Education Tax Warrant for Tax Year 2022	Reviewed
Report – Action Ambulance 6-Town Subsidy Allocation	Reviewed
Report – Action Ambulance Performance Reports thru 10/31/2021	Reviewed
Report – Wetland Construction Compliance Monitoring Report – NH DOT 15987	Reviewed
Receipt – Aquatic Invasive Species Control Fund Reimbursement (\$1,672)	Reviewed
Receipt – Aquatic Invasive Species Control Fund Reimbursement (\$4,460)	Reviewed
Letter – Mt. Washington Valley Economic Council re: 2022 Membership	Reviewed
Letter – NH DRA re: 2022-2026 Assessing Contract Review	Reviewed

Being no further input, Ernie made a motion to adjourn. Melissa seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen N. White, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on _____:

Leslie R. Babb	Ernest F. Day, Jr.	Melissa M. Florio
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