



TOWN OF WARNER

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Road Committee Meeting DRAFT Minutes

Wednesday, 7:00 pm May 04, 2022

Warner Town Hall 5 E Main St

Main Floor Meeting Room – In Person

I. Open Meeting/Roll Call

7:12 pm -Tim Allen, Department of Public Works Director (DPW) opened the Meeting of the Road Committee

Attending: Chair Allen, Christine Frost Select Board Representative, Ed Mical Emergency Management Director (EMD), Jon France Fire Chief, Michael Cutting Budget Committee Chair, Ken Cogswell

Absent: William Chandler Police Chief

Others Present: John Leavitt, Resident

II. Review Reason and Purpose of the Original Road Committee

Chair Allen explained the reconvening of the Road Committee is due to a majority vote that approved an amendment to the March 2022 Town Meeting Road Construction Warrant Article:

Article 5 as Amended (*remove strikeouts, add italicized*)

“Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,615,000 (Two Million, Six Hundred Fifteen Thousand Dollars) for the purpose of ~~making repairs, rebuilding, and improving certain Town roads, including the drainage of such roads, including of engineering and rebuilding of Schoodac Road, Poverty Plains Road, Pumpkin Hill Road, Mason Hill Road, and North Village Road only, and other such Town roads the Select Board determines need such work,~~ with all engineered plans, cost estimates, and contract bids reviewed by the previously established Road Committee before contracts are awarded. The Select Board would award contracts after review and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$2,615,000 (Two Million, Six Hundred Fifteen Thousand Dollars) bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and to authorize the Select Board to issue and negotiate such bonds and notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 (Twenty Five Thousand Dollars) through taxation for the interest payment on the bonds and notes.”

Chair said the amendment directs the Road Committee to review current projects - and hopeful future projects. He answered Select Board Rep Christine Frost’s question that he would like the committee to help create a 10-year plan so that the Town can be on a road project schedule. Emergency Management Director Ed Mical added that a numbering system was previously created to prioritize projects and Chair said he would need to research that. The Chair said he read the past Road Committee’s meeting minutes. He believed this committee is on the same “track” with three projects from earlier road project lists.

III. Discuss Projects Proposed for Use of the Road Construction Loan

Planned projects explained by Chair Allen.

- a. \$375,000 - Schoodac Road from Exit 8 to Brown Road (approximately), roughly 7800-8000 feet, replace all cross pipes, 6 inch reclaim-excluding the rebuild area near the corner of Brown & Schoodac, due to it being a newer section; repave with a 2 inch base coat and a 1 1/2 inch top coat. The Chair replied to Budget Committee Chair Mike Cutting that the estimate of over \$400,000 shown on the presentation at the March Town Meeting was incorrect.
- b. \$650,000- Pumpkin Hill Road from Mason Hill Rd to Pumpkin Blossom Farm including Mason Hill Road to Burnt Hill Road intersection, design portion is presently being worked on, complete rebuild, box out, drainage improvements, with a 2 ½ inch base coat and a 1 ½ inch top coat.
- c. \$450,000 - From 490 Pumpkin Hill Road (Prior buffalo farm) to Duck Pond Lane (approximately) a 6 inch reclaim and drainage project, remainder of Pumpkin Hill Road (Duck Pond Road to approximately 624 Pumpkin Hill Road) is a complete box out.
- d. \$525,000 - North Village Road from Silver Brook to Mink Hill Road intersection, complete rebuild with drainage and improvements, the project is the installation of a concrete liner in the pipe arch at Silver Lake.
- e. \$255,000 - North Village Road from Depot Street to under Route 89 to the top of the hill, approximately 1300 feet, drainage and catch basin issues exists due to age, a camera is necessary to inspect these, reclaim, compact, grade and pave. Not included in the cost but planned is a review of the bridge deck over the Warner River
- f. \$365,000 - Poverty Plains Road to Route 127 to class VI Bog Road, 7400 feet, the bottom of a 36 inch cross pipe, the largest of 4 under Route 127, is gone and needs replacing (even if the road project is not done).

Chair explained the last project is on the list based on work not done on the area since the 70's and 80's. He said it is the worst portion of road to maintain in winter; after plowing, water freezes in the middle creating an ice strip; in 2 places water drains from the bridge flooding a residence; attempts to maintain the road are frequent and costly on this very heavily traveled road.

The Chair noted cost estimates are as of November 2021, current material costs may be double or triple. He said grinding, grading and compacting costs are minimal in comparison especially using the Town's own material.

Answering Select Person Frost's question, Chair said the Town crew can work on portions of projects and group the work on multiple projects for bids for finish work - it is an option if that is a cost benefit to the Town over single project costs. He said a decision is needed about what will be included in bid requests. He said the crew doing the work is less costly but takes them away from doing other Town work. The Chair explained he is confident that the reclaim projects are good choices due to the relative "newness" of the road material that will be ground up and reused.

Chair asked for comments on the project list. He provided that from the original 2011 Road list - Pumpkin Hill, Mason Hill Roads- both partly done, N Village Road, partly done, Mason Hill Road, done, Waldron Hill Road, done. He said an Exeter NH company, *Flynn*, did core samples - hot top vs gravel - previously on Schoodac Rd; results were good: 4-6 inches hot top in most place, 12+ inches of bank run; ditching on a reclaim can be done by Town crew to prepare for paving company to come in and work.

Budget Committee Chair Mike Cutting asked if there were updates to the project costs or plans to review the projects and update based on projected increases. Chair said he has not had responses from those he contacted but was told and expects the cost of petroleum to drive prices up on the materials and products it is used in. He would like to use his time productively rather than constant calling for cost updates and then have to change the plans.

The Chair said expectations are to have the Road Committee's decisions determine the direction he goes in so that he can make the best use of his time planning to efficiently get bids sent out and projects started. Mr. Cutting agreed it is important to have accurate project costs because the amount allocated to spend is limited - \$2.6 million.

A discussion followed that included the unknown of when or if costs will continue rising, level out or decrease, is delaying projects in anticipation of lower costs an option, who should decide which projects or parts thereof to do, what is sacrificed if Town crew works on more of a project to save money.

Chair explained: N Village Road – started at \$38,000 now up to \$66,000, may be a good project to hold off on; Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) funds available at a 90/10 match rather than the usual 75/25 match. Ed explained more in detail about deadlines and application process.

Chair said the Town has an approved Department of Environmental Services (DES) wetlands permit for a concrete liner – the bottom of the current pipe is rotted - sides ok. The permit approved building 7 inches of concrete up the sides of the pipe (Town gains 25 years of life for the pipe). The permit expires August 2023 but with FEMA funds, it may be possible to extend and change the permit to a “replacement” project with a box culvert.

FEMA funds would pay for replacement of the pipe and related work, not the entire project. Since the Town is still responsible to pave up to the bridge and away from it, \$525K is still needed to complete the project but the result is taxpayers pay 10% of \$825K and not 100% of \$525K. An estimated box culvert cost is \$350K to \$400K and estimated to last 100 years vs 15-20 for concrete.

Chair would like to be ready with plans to apply for the \$66 million of State Bridge Funds. The N Village Road bridge was built in the 1960's and should be addressed, although it is not state “red listed”. There are funds in the Bridge Capital Reserve Funds (CRF) that can cover the concrete liner due to the project delay in 2021 and the parts shortage.

Bids should go to multiple contractors for comparable bids; the engineer estimates one pipe on Plains Road (a big pipe toward the end of the road) and one pipe on Schoodac Road need to be permitted; others crossing will not. Chair thinks the Town can prepare a Request For Proposal (RFP) but asks for input. Should the Town spend money to have an engineer? Ed said it sounds like the Town could do the plans. Christine said there are savings that exist if an engineer does the entire bid process, he is paid to coordinate and it is worth it to save Tim's time when there are so many other things to do.

Tim said for Mason and Pumpkin Hill Road, the engineer is doing road profiles (right of ways, drainage plans). His costs are between \$20K -25K. Christine said the bidders pay for plan copies – others agreed. She also said it was a “no brainer” that the engineering costs were worth paying to allow Tim to do other necessary work even if there are 6 projects because some projects will be grouped together. She said an engineer's time spent coordinating with contractors, multiple times, permitting issues, legal requirements, applications and etc, is more efficient than Tim trying to do that and other department responsibilities.

Jon asked about reclaim project plans. Chair did not know if stamped plans with profile work were needed if the Town does the ditching and prep work for reclaim projects. He said he needs to talk with the engineer to find out. He said having completed plans for each project allows the Town to be prepared to apply for funding as soon as it becomes available as well as having existing plans for future highway directors.

Qualification, and costs, for Engineering - Tim will reach out for 3 companies that can provide the volume of work the Town is requesting. He will accomplish this within 2-3 weeks.

Update: The road construction loan with Sugar River Bank is in process of being completed, 3.75% interest is expected.

Other Business: Chair asked about other Town bridge, culvert, and paving projects: does the committee want to meet for the specific projects as listed above or schedule meetings to discuss all Town projects

Per the vote at the 2022 Town Meeting, legally, Christine said, the committee has to meet “to review bid contractsbefore contracts are awarded.” She said it seems like a good idea for running a tally, either a map or other prioritization of what is going on in Town, something of what exists. Tim said there are 40 miles of hard top road, he has about half on a cycle.

Jon said he agreed with Tim’s focus of maintaining good roads, do not let them deteriorate and add to the bad roads. He agreed meeting regularly would help Tim and prepare for Town Meeting. Chair would like to meet monthly to discuss what his plans and ideas are with the committee. The committee discussed when to meet next. Wednesday, June 15, 7:00 pm agreed on.

Christine asked about completing projects this year. Chair said the reclaim could be scheduled for July or August but if engineering permitting is needed, it will take most of the season to get it ready for next spring, that is realistic, he has no choice with supply shortages and delivery delays. Also, Chair said, he has to prepare the Town gravel pit and create the material needed for projects – it takes time. Christine thought it was all appropriate and the Town will be ready to go first thing in the spring. Mike said he would forward the road project list he has from Town Meeting to the other members.

Chair said he is also waiting on a resident’s signature on the Red Chimney Road easement before ordering that culvert.....not sure how that will be resolved but would hate to lose the \$200,000 funding. He said he spoke to the resident who said he would contact the Chair but as of yet, has not. Chair said he received a call from NH Fish and Game Department about additional ARM’s grant money. He said he would like to be able to apply for funds for the other culverts on Red Chimney.

Motion and Vote to Adjourn, All in Favor.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:25 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Judith A. Newman Rogers
Admin Asst to the Select Board