Wentworth Select Board
Meeting Minutes
April 7, 2020

Those present: Arnold Scheller, Andrew Lasser and Linda Franz. In attendance via Zoom conference call, Omer Ahern, Jordan King, Paul Manson and Chief Trott.

Called to Order: Arnold Scheller, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 5:07pm.

Select Board non-contemporaneously signed the following documents, as permitted by NH Governor’s Executive Order 2020-04:

Vendor and payroll checks.
Select Board Meeting Minutes for March 24, 2020.
DRA form MS-232.
Letter to Cohos Advisors approving the 2017 & 2018 financial statements.
Timber Tax Warrants for Thomson, Scheller and Bassingthwate.
Intent to Cut for Comeau.
Two Veterans Tax Credit applications.

Arnold Scheller thanked the residents of Wentworth who have been out cleaning up litter from roadsides throughout the Town. This has demonstrated good town spirit and is greatly appreciated. Mr. Scheller also noted that there are approximately 320 culverts in town. Many of them are at the end of driveways of town residents. It is the resident’s responsibility to clear culverts of debris if they are located on their property. Again, it would be greatly appreciated if residents would perform this task to lessen the workload of the Highway Department.

Discussed progress of bridge projects. Nothing new to report. NH DOT is running behind schedule due to pandemic. J. King to ask HEB Engineering to contact NH DOT representative to keep Wentworth actively on agendas.

Addressed progress of completing deficient meeting minutes from 2019. O. Ahern to discuss with Francis Muzzey.

Regarding a letter of engagement from Cohos Advisors for services related to insurance claim. Consensus is that Cohos (then Crane & Bell) should not be charging a fee for writing the report required by the insurance provider as they were retained by the town during the time of the events. **A. Scheller made a motion that Chairman Scheller call Cohos to negotiate agreement. Seconded by J. King. By roll call vote, A. Scheller voted yes. J. King voted yes. O. Ahern voted yes. All voted in the affirmative and motion carried.**

Road Agent presented a request to expend $16,000 for magnesium chloride. Select Board requests a certification from vendor that solution does not contain arsenic. Board also requests a review of vendor contract. Tabled until next Select Board meeting.
Road Agent presented three proposals for paving of Red Oak Hill Road and section of road by King Forest. Road Agent recommends R&D Paving as they have a reputation for doing quality work, and they are willing to work with King Forest’s work schedule.

A.Scheller made a motion to choose one of the three proposals for paving projects. Seconded by J.King. By roll call vote, A.Scheller voted yes. J. King voted yes. O.Ahern voted yes. All voted in the affirmative and motion carried.

A.Scheller made a motion to contract with R&D Paving as they will coordinate schedules with King Forest. Seconded by J.King. By roll call vote, A.Scheller voted yes. J. King voted yes. O.Ahern voted no. The motion carried with a vote of 2-1.

Road Agent presented three estimates for the purchase of culverts. A.Scheller made a motion to purchase culverts from Core & Main. Seconded by J.King. By roll call vote, A.Scheller voted yes. J. King voted yes. O.Ahern voted yes. All voted in the affirmative and motion carried.

Road Agent presented a schedule of spring and summer maintenance and construction. The schedule is an attachment to these minutes.

L.Franz discussed three proposals from accounting firms that will provide auditing services for a 3-year contract. She recommends Plodzik & Sanderson at a cost of $14,000 per year ($6,000 less than previous accounting fee). This is not the lowest proposal, but she feels that it is the best fit. A.Scheller made a motion for L.Franz to negotiate a fee reduction with Plodzik & Sanderson and if successful recommends retaining their services. Seconded by J.King. By roll call vote, A.Scheller voted yes. J. King voted yes. O.Ahern voted yes. All voted in the affirmative and motion carried.

L.Franz addressed a complaint from a resident regarding the 2020 warrant article for videographer services. Per the petition for warrant, a videographer will be hired to video and record Select Board and Town meetings and live stream on YouTube. Videographer will then edit recorded meetings and upload to Pemi Baker TV who will then broadcast on their cable TV station. This procedure is in accordance with approved and passed warrant article. Andrew Lasser was hired to perform these videographer services by a carried motion of the March 24, 2020 Select Board meeting. A copy of the resident’s complaint is attached to these minutes.

Discussed Wentworth Village Road closure during renovation construction of the Congregational Church. A.Scheller made a motion to allow the Congregational Church’s construction company to close road around the church, as proposed, during construction. Neighboring residents should be notified. Suggested Richard Borger, Sr. to notify. Seconded by J.King. By roll call vote, A.Scheller voted yes. J. King voted yes. O.Ahern voted yes. All voted in the affirmative and motion carried.

O.Ahern made a motion that the Town suspend purchases of non-essential, non-emergency products and services for 60 days due to the current pandemic situation. No vote taken, but acknowledged by those participating in meeting.
A. Scheller made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by J. King. All voted yes and meeting was adjourned at 6:20pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Linda Franz, Administrative Assistant

Arnold Scheller
Chairperson

Omer C. Ahern, Jr.
Board Member

Jordan King
Board Member
Wentworth highway Department

Spring & summer, maintenance and construction for 2020

Yearly maintenance

1. Grade all gravel roads
2. Sweep all paved roads
3. Clean and wash all town Bridges
4. Inspect all culverts (325+ in the town)
5. Flush and clean necessary culvert
6. Mow / cut road sides back 6' +
7. Applying magnesium chloride to specified town roads
8. Hooper Hill emergency lane

Construction project summer 2020

1. Finish ditching roads (There is still probably 16 mile of road 32 lane miles) this will be a lot of work and time!
2. Bridge work. Saunders hill bridge needs to be re decked and new runner’s, Ellsworth hill bridge needs new runners, east side road bridge needs new runners and a new header on the north side of the bridge.
3. Culvert replacement, there is at least 8 culvert that need to be replaced! 4 on red oak hill (need to be done before paving) 1 on currier hill road, 1 on turner road and 2 on cheever road, also one culvert
needs to be lowered on eastside road just to the south of currier hill road entrance.

4. Paving, we will be paving all of red oak hill road and a 400’ section on eastside road infront on king lumber. When paving is done, the town will be responsible for backing the pavement edges and creating a shoulder for proper drainage.

5. Gravel, Hauling and spreading gravel on roads that need it really bad, this will be accessed on a road by road basis

These are the major project’s that the highway department is committed to getting accomplished this spring, summer and fall. There is no way that the highway department can do all this work with a 3 man crew and we will be contacting local contractors to sub out some of this work, the work I will be looking to sub out is some of the culvert replacement’s and road shoulder work on red oak hill after the paving. The highway department has $4000.00 in the budget for sub-contractors, line item (4312.09B)

Thank You

Paul Manson
March 29, 2020

Just finished watching the video of March 24, 2020.

First and foremost I OBJECT TO HIRING ANDREW LASSER AS RECORDER OF THE MEETINGS AND PAYING HIM AT A RATE OF $30 PER HOUR for the following reasons:
1) He cut off the opening of this meeting for an unknown length of time for unknown reasons. No formal announced opening with time of opening appeared on the video and no pledge of allegiance, if such was cited, was on the video.
2) The video ran needlessly for over an hour with the message "be right back" playing while the Selectmen were in a Non-Public meeting for what is assumed to have been all of that time. As a correction to this needless recording, the chairman of the Board should clearly and loudly, if necessary, note the time entering the Non-Public meeting and the time upon the return to open regular meeting. And this gives reason for another objection:
3) The audio is terrible. Not only is the sound quality poor in the March 24 video, I have NOT viewed one recording in which the audio was acceptable.
4) Andrew volunteered at one time to volunteer his time to film the meetings if he was available. And apparently he is available! The Selectmen, at the time of the proposal of this service, and the Town's people at the Annual Meeting were led to believe that the $30 per hour would pay for a more professional video and at the same hourly rate, without the cut-offs, and with a sound quality worth trying to listen to. I still do not know even after watching a portion of the video twice if I was chosen Cemetery Trustee or not. Voices were mumbled from the microphone (such as it is) being placed so far from the ones that are speaking.
5) I believe Andrew is taking advantage of the town at this cost having deceived many into believing that the recordings would be done by a more qualified camera operator with more professional equipment. His resulting integrity and that of the video is far from acceptable in my opinion.
6) There is no easily found link to the video or videos and the videos do not appear to be available to the public in a timely and convenient fashion. This absence of easy access was made known some time ago without a solution even noticeably attempted even at this late date. At least two previous attempts did not turn up the March 24 video for unknown reasons, possibly due to non-existence at the time or due to incorrect search criteria. A direct link to the video on the Town's web page would easily solve this problem and if the Town is going to pay for this service it should be through quality providers that know these things and expect quality from themselves. This service should not be a one man show with the poor quality and the potential for unreliability.
6) And furthermore the warrant article specifically states the money is: "to be used for participation in pbCAM for the purpose of making video recorded selectmen's meeting". Why would you even remotely consider spending the same money for lesser professional quality work? I believe your decision to pay Lasser any amount of money is in violation of the warrant article and the vote thereon.

Please read this at the next Board Meeting for public information.

Andrew will be recording locally + live streaming, then next day will edit for non-publics, etc. and upload to pbCAM.