Selectboard/Road Crew Monthly Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2018 – Windham Town Office

Present at Meeting: Maureen Bell – Selectboard Chair, Acting Clerk

Kord Scott – Selectman

Bob Kehoe – Selectman

Dan Diaz – Road Crew member

Richard Paré – Road Commissioner

Meeting commenced at 8:30

**New Business:**

**Temporary Road Crew Member/Hours** – after last night’s Selectboard meeting it was determined that Ralph Wyman would once again, temporarily, join the road crew for about the next 6 weeks (does not want to work as a plow driver this season). Discussion ensued about the crew hours. It was determined that during non-emergency situations, the hours would remain 6AM – 2PM. If Ralph, as a temp, wants to start later, that is acceptable to all parties.

During the snow season, however, employees need to be on alert and flexible in their hours. We might have to start earlier than 6AM to get ahead of storms, making the roads safe for the school bus and other vehicles. And of course, we might be working later than 2PM. Weekends are, not only a possibility, but a probability! To this end, Dan wondered if we could change the work week to end on a Friday, so that if they have to work the weekend, their hours during the next week could possibly be reduced so that they don’t work as much overtime. Most were in agreement that that was not a good idea and noted that we are more than willing to pay the overtime.

It was also discussed that in order to maximize our equipment and keep up with the storms, Richard and Bob can work as extra plow operators, pro bono (Bob only on the 550 until he does a refresher course on the big truck). Kord also has a CDL and plow experience and is willing to help out, if needed.

Richard is looking into changing up the plow routes, perhaps having one truck do the paved roads so that there doesn’t have to be as much “switching up” of equipment on 2 trucks (sanding & salt references here). “We’ve always done it that way” does not have to be our guiding principle.” We also have to watch the sequence of treating the roads – sanding and salting first, then plowing, does not make sense.

Kord is enthusiastic about promoting “Safe roads at safe speeds”. Our goal does not have to be 100% snow-free roads. People have to learn to accept that they must slow down to the prevailing conditions. Maureen suggested writing an article for the next Windham New & Notes about this issue.

In short, we are relying on Richard’s expertise in guiding the team – they will read the storm and act accordingly. It will be a learning experience, as it often is.

An observation by Kord (a little off topic) is that the work done on Chase Road has been evident. The culverts are working – the rain is not sheeting across the road.

**Open Road Crew Position** – Richard and Kord don’t believe we have to have a foreman at this point. Richard is acting as such, in terms of work schedules and guidance. Bob believes that if we hire the right qualified and experienced candidate for crew member we’ll be OK. Richard pointed out that he is confident that Dan can evolve into the foreman in the future.

For now, Dan is concerned about some issues that he sees as the foreman’s job, i.e. answering the phones and residents’ comments, authorization to order supplies, both office and equipment, the chain of command with 2 employees at the same level and more. Bob interjected that he doesn’t really believe in titles and with such a tight crew (basically 2 members) they should be able to figure these things out, again with Richard’s guidance.

On the other hand, the new crew member will be subject to a 90-day review, at which point, if we feel the need and it is applicable, we can promote the employee to foreman. Likewise, according to our Personnel Policy, the 90-day review period could also be used to terminate the employee if it isn’t working out.

It was determined that for the search, Richard will screen the applications and recommend the ones he wants to see come in for interviews, which the Selectboard will conduct.

Maureen will start working on the ad to be placed in (on?) The Chester Telegraph and Vermont Local Roads email blast. Richard will look it over and tweak if necessary. Before this meeting was concluded, the Town Clerk had the sandwich board advertisement in place outside the office!

**Road Maintenance Schedule/Projects**  - see above comment about Chase Road culverts. Main focus for now continues to be ditching and cleaning culverts. There is an issue, however with road erosion near a house on White Road. Richard has taken a look at it – there is gravel washing off the road, onto the lawn which then dumps into a stream. There are 2 options available to us: we can put in a 30’ or 65’ x 18” culvert.

Another important issue is at the Chase Road intersection with Windham Hill Road – we will need to cut the asphalt, reset the culvert and (order some and) use hot mix to finish it.

Per Kord, we have the option to go into a restricted fund account for money for paving projects.

Richard believes all the culvert replacements have to be done this year.

**Comments/questions from Dan** –

* for the PACIF project, we have to get rid of the red ladder, as it does not have a rating sticker on it. Will be replaced with an OSHA-compliant ladder.
* We are out of grease.
* The septic needs to be pumped.
* Are we doing oil undercoats this season
* We need to get 2 more steer chains for each truck
* Need 2 x 10’ cutting blades
* Signs for George Dutton – we have reflective (not retro-reflective) STOP signs. Can we install those (answer: yes)
* We need signposts

Dan will get pricing on these things.

**Road Widths** – Kord will talk to Elizabeth and Jonathan Stevens about getting a list of all road widths. We need to remember what they are supposed to be and maintain them responsibly.

**Old Business:**

**Sand bids** – After comparing product from 2 bidders, they are very similar. Eastman’s bid is $0.35/yard less than Renaud, so we will award the bid to Eastman.

**Culvert Bids –** we were expecting 3 bids, but only received 1, from Eastman Sand & Gravel dated 8.27.18. The “no-bids” were from Chaves and Ameden – apparently not interested in the work. Richard will review the bid.

**PACIF update** – this was discussed in length at last night’s Selectboard meeting. We are closing in on the list – 3 or so items can be knocked off within the week. The remaining few will be taken care of shortly.

**Budget review** – Kord will meet with the Treasurer and Road Crew to discuss this issue and report back to the Selectboard.

Kord moved that we adjourn the meeting at 10:38. All in favor.

Minutes submitted by Maureen Bell