

TOWN OF THORNTON

November 7, 2007

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

9:00 AM The meeting was called to order.

Board members present: Arthur Gross, Jim Parziale and Roy Sabourn

Also present: Administrator Andrew (TA), Jim Demeritt, Dean & Duane Johnston; Tom Dubey, Road Agent (RA); Paul Hatch, NH Department of Safety-Homeland Security; Dave Hilliard, Transfer Station Manager.

Selectman Gross inquired if TA had heard from auditors Plodzik & Sanderson relative to auditing issues. The TA has not and has sent a letter requesting a response.

Selectman Sabourn inquired if the Powers parcel across from Frannie's Restaurant had submitted their timber harvest report. The TA will verify but does not think so.

The TA requested the board decide on the percent to be charged for storm damage timber harvests. The board decided on 5% (vs. the usual 10%) for storm damage timber harvests. AGREED (x3). The timber warrant will be adjusted accordingly.

Selectman Gross inquired if the Grafton County Senior Citizens request for 2008 was increased. The TA confirmed that it had increased from \$1,500 to \$2,000.

Blake Mt. Road – The board will adjourn this meeting to do a site visit at that location.

9:15 Dean & Duane Johnston representing the Central NH Snowmobiling Club stated they have a trail that goes under the interstate on Peaked Hill Pond Road. They would like the board's permission to sign it and open it up to snowmobiles. They continued that Chief Joyce has no problem with their plan and the Road Agent has requested that snowmobile crossing signs be posted. The State of NH has liability insurance that covers a landowner if a trail goes on their property. There are a couple of businesses and local people that would probably use it and it would connect to the Ham and railroad property. The trail is not currently on the maps, but would be added with board approval. Sharon O'Donnell and the owners of the Valley Brook Cabins are aware of the request. Selectman Sabourn inquired if state permission would be needed to go under the interstate? Mr. Johnston will inquire as permission will be needed for crossing US Route 3 also. Selectman Gross inquired if the trail would allow access to Peaked Hill Pond. Yes. Selectman Sabourn stated that signage is definitely needed. The board agreed (x3) and Selectman Gross signed a right of way trail easement with the stipulation that adequate signage be posted. It was noted that the agreement can be terminated with 30 days notice by either party.

Mr. Johnston stated snowmobiles are not allowed in the Peaked Hill Pond area until December 1 unless there is 8" or more of snow.

Mr. Johnston asked permission to move a 911 sign by the Pemi Valley Campground 5' either way as it is in the snowmobile trail. Permission was granted.

9:28 Paul Hatch, NH Department of Safety, Homeland Security & Emergency Management Division - Selectman Gross stated that the tentatively scheduled December 19 ice emergency exercise would be a good idea if Campton is also in agreement. Mr. Hatch stated that the Campton board has approved and will participate in the exercise. He continued that this is a table top exercise where department heads would meet for an all day session starting around 8:30 AM and ending around 4:00 PM. It is meant to be a review of how the town's emergency management plan would work in the event of an ice storm. Selectman Sabourn inquired if Campton would be meeting alone and then the two towns would communicate due to shared resources. Mr. Hatch confirmed and stated it is a way to test our resources and to see if FEMA could meet the needs of the communities if an event occurred. He continued it is good to test a plan in a drill and make changes if needed. Selectman Sabourn agreed. It was moved to participate in the December 19th, 2007 emergency management exercise. PASSED (X3) The TA stated that she and Mr. Hatch had also discussed that the exercise would be cancelled if weather dictated. Mr. Hatch confirmed.

Selectman Sabourn inquired about the possibility of grant funds for a covered bridge undermining issue. Mr. Hatch responded that there are three ways in which there might be funds: 1) storm damage, 2) a project identified in the hazard mitigation plan such as upsizing a culvert that is too small, or 3) a large item such as a bridge replacement if it is undersized and fire trucks can't cross it. Mr. Hatch stated that if water is washing abutments, a mitigation project might be possible to redirect the water. Selectman Sabourn stated that an engineer is looking at the bridge prior to the board taking further action. Mr. Hatch stated that if a project is not in the hazard mitigation plan, the board can amend the plan annually and re-approve the updated plan.

Jim Demeritt presented an article from a 1997 town report about the covered bridge. Selectman Sabourn read the article to those present. Mr. Demeritt asked if an engineering report had ever been done and if so where it was. He expressed that maybe the town didn't even own the bridge. The TA responded with the board's approval that an engineering report was submitted and is on file in the Selectmen's office. The then Board of Selectmen accepted the bridge at the end of December 1998. The TA will copy the report for the RA to submit to the engineer evaluating the bridge's current condition.

Dave Hilliard, Transfer Station Manager, reported that Sinclair Construction out of Ashland has been shut off relative to construction debris. Mr. Sinclair stated that Waterville Estates does not allow canisters on site in their development. Mr. Hilliard stated he wanted to inform the board. He allowed one truck be dumped and charged them for that load rather than make them leave with a loaded vehicle. The Board agreed and thanked Dave for his professional handling of the situation.

Mr. Hilliard reported that he has requested an extension from NH Department of Transportation for the driveway permit that expires in November. Mr. Pillsbury from the DOT does not have a problem with the extension. Signs that are being obtained through a grant won't be in until January. Mr. Moulton at NHDOT has also agreed to the extension. The new approach from Route 175 can be finished as long as it is blocked for the winter. Some of the fill used to construct the road has been from the tailings of screening sand. The new signs will be free through a NH the Beautiful grant.

The TA reported that the Conley's on Thornton Gore Road have responded to the board's order to cease and desist. She told them that the order stays in place until such time as a building permit has been applied for and/or they have satisfied the board's request for information. The owner had stated that they do not intend to live in the trailer, and it is only there for construction purposes. Selectman Sabourn reported that the trailer has been moved again.

MB Tractor is going to adjust their invoice for the mower to reflect hours used and will send us a credit on the account.

Hidden Acres Road-Marianne Peabody, Planning Board Secretary, asked that the selectmen be made aware that the Planning Board has voted to retain the \$13,800 in escrow until 11/08 as the final coat of pavement has just been applied to that road.

The TA reported that Lee Freeman asked that the board be made aware of his concern about the depletion of sand from town property as it relates to GASB recording. He also asked if there was a plan for reclaiming areas of the property. The board asked that the TA research the GASB information with the auditors and let Mr. Freeman know as well as the fact that the plan is to reclaim the property.

The TA asked to whom the board would like to dedicate the Town Report and for cover suggestions.

Selectman Sabourn stated he has not had a report from Jeff Caulder from the NH Dept. of Safety. Mr. Caulder had stated he did not think that towing a truck with the grader was a problem, but wanted to verify it. Selectman Sabourn stated it would be good to get the answer in writing. All agreed.

Selectman Gross stated he talked with Bob Whitehouse about his road and suggested Mr. Whitehouse contact Marianne to get details on the pit reclamation and road improvements.

It was moved to accept the minutes of the October 24, 2007 Selectmen's Meeting.

PASSED (x3)

The TA informed the board that an abutter has expressed interest in purchasing two parcels in Waterville Estates that were recently taken by Tax Collector Deed. She inquired

if the board was interested in liquidating the parcels through auction or sealed bid. The board requested that the sealed bid process be initiated.

10:09 Winter Road Policy – The RA requested the board continue the policy again this year. He stated that his department’s personnel don’t damage property intentionally, and the policy states the town’s policy about personal property in the town right of way clearly. The Board agreed that the policy makes sense.

Box culvert on Mill Brook Rd -The RA received three quotes to replace the failing culvert. Dirt Designs \$1,800, Jim Sanborn \$2,000, L.E Johnston \$3,300. He recommended that Dirt Designs be given the job. APPROVED (x3)

Paving should be completed today. Waterthorn Road needs edging done. The contractors installed an excellent apron on the highway garage entrance. The base coat has been done on 3 roads in Sugar Run, final coat should be finished today. All agreed that grinding was a good option on the roads prior to paving for a better end product. The RA stated he wants to be on site when paving to oversee the process. Selectman Sabourn stated that is a wage well spent for the town.

A driveway was recently paved by Paquette Paving on Sullivan Farm Road. Their equipment broke up about 50’ of shoulder. The RA has a call in to Paquette Paving relative to having them repair the damage to the shoulder of a town road.

Warning Lights – The State of New Hampshire has a new permit application for vehicle warning lights. This is a legitimate application initiated by the director. The type, location, switch location and what the light is to be used for all have to be noted. The request needs to be approved by the Department of Safety and carried in the vehicle with the registration. There is currently no charge for the permit. A new vehicle or owner of a vehicle needs a new application, as well as a change in the type of light. Anyone who has a yellow light must apply, and white strobes are no longer allowed. The RA will make copies of the permit application form to post. He has given a copy to Police Lt. Foley for their records.

Fadden Road - Jim Demeritt stated that it needs to be graded again and the lower shoulder should be sloped into the ditch line. The RA will add it to the list to be done after the sand is completed and the trucks readied for winter operations and the ground is not too frozen.

Sand – The RA did a rough estimate for what it would cost if the town purchased its sand. At roughly \$270 a truckload it would be about \$60,000 to purchase the product. The highway department puts up about 3,000 yards at a cost of about \$10,000 in house. They should be finished putting up sand tomorrow.

10:27 It was moved to enter non-public session pursuant to RSA 91:A-3 for a personnel issue. The Board of Selectmen, Road Agent and Town Administrator were present.

10:40 The board returned to public session. It was moved to seal the minutes. PASSED (x3)

The RA recommended the hiring of Tim Collins and Greg Sanborn for the highway winter seasonal positions at a rate of \$12.92/hr. So moved. PASSED (x3)

Selectman Sabourn inquired the total miles of town roads. The RA responded that there are about 55 miles, 23 of which are dirt. Selectman Sabourn stated that a tractor with a boom mower is for sale near North Haverhill, and wondered if it might be worth the town's while to consider purchasing a tractor for this town's mowing needs. The RA responded that we don't have the manpower to take one of two employees for a month to 6 weeks to mow town roads annually. The tractor would sit the rest of the time. Selectman Sabourn stated that if the town is paying \$4500 now to rent a mower for two weeks when really we should have it for 4 weeks, it might make sense. If the town could buy a tractor for a reasonable price, it would last for many years. He noted that the tree canopy will become a problem in the future. The board authorized that Selectman Sabourn could look at the tractor for the hours, price and condition and report back to board.

The board discussed and recommended the RA look at hiring a 3rd full time employee in 2008 for the budget process. The RA agreed that the roads need more attention, more paving, more permitting, culverts. Selectman Sabourn stated the need to take down dead stuff on Gore Road, Upper Mad River Road, trimming of softwoods before there is ice and some bridge rails need to be done plus it is safer having 2 man crews. The board supports budgeting a 3rd man.

11:00 It was moved to adjourn to a site visit at Blake Mt. Road relative to drainage issues. The board meeting was adjourned after the site visit. PASSED (x3)

APPROVALS:

Building Permit:

10 6 2	D&M Aylward	roof over porch
17 4 63	G&B 16-2 Bell St	new house w/fin cellar

**The next scheduled Selectmen's Meeting
Will be
November 14, 2007
9:00 AM at the Municipal Building**