

# TOWN OF THORNTON

## June 11, 2008

### Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

7:00 PM The meeting was called to order.

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

Also present: Administrator Andrew (TA), Jim Demeritt, Giff & Sally Kriebel, Road Agent (RA) Tom Dubey, Mark Santoro, Walt Stockwell, James & Margaret Manning, and Steve Twohig

Budget Committee – The board thanked Giff Kriebel for his interest in serving on the budget committee. Mr. Kriebel was appointed (x3)

North Country Council - Jim Demeritt is planning to get more information from the organization. Selectman Sabourn inquired if the town is getting its money worth. Sally Kriebel stated that the NCC has been helpful in the past with some grant writing and ordinance assistance. She has participated in a couple of their programs.

Ms. Kriebel thanked the board on behalf of the historical society for all the work that has been done and survey work at the old town house.

7:15 Sellingham Road - Mark Santoro from 57 Sellingham Road stated he was upset with the lack of help the police department has given him in regards to a neighbor blocking the way to his property. The police have said it is a civil matter. Selectman Sabourn stated he had been there not long after the original complaint. The road was barely passable. This winter was very bad and the road was barely wide enough to get through. A fire truck would not have been able to get in. It is too narrow. He agreed that the issues are civil not criminal because it is a class VI (not maintained) public way that may be used at ones own risk. Mr. Santoro needs to utilize the court system against neighbors blocking the way if done intentionally. It is no more than a public way that can be used. The police department researched the RSA's and came to that conclusion. You do have legal recourse as far as life safety issues. Mr. Santoro stated his neighbor put the snow there intentionally. Selectman Sabourn stated the snow had been pushed back when he was there. It is really a driveway that is being blocked. If the neighbor is encroaching on your civil rights you need to follow up with your attorney. Mr. Santoro stated he never heard back from the chief about filing an injunction. Selectman Sabourn stated that is a legal issue that that the chief might not answer. It would have to go through the court system.

Minutes of the May 28 and June 6, 2008 were as amended. APPROVED (x3)

7:30 Hidden Acres Road - Walt Stockwell, James & Margaret Manning from Hidden Acres Road. Mr. Stockwell asked to discuss in detail what might be done to alleviate the problems with the street. The board's letter of April 6 does not have specifics. His letter

had detailed the remedial steps that had been taken and he felt the board's response was very terse tabling the issue. The developer did the asphalt and drainage stone as requested. The surface is good. He suggested a site visit during a downpour. Selectman Sabourn responded he examined the road with the road agent and saw what the owner on the top of the hill has done. The driveway is so steep that sand runs down into the road and down the road 6-8" deep. Although he is not an engineer he doesn't believe the divots in the driveway will help much and has no idea how that drainage issue is going to be resolved. The lot is narrow and steep. A civil engineer with drainage experience might have some ideas. Whatever steps the homeowners/developer take, it was a consensus of the board that we should wait to make sure the actions taken resolve the issue. A possible solution might be relocating the driveway to the road behind the property and abandoning the current driveway.

Mr. Stockwell stated the sand in the road was excessive due to the severe winter. Some of the sand was from the road, and the owner used a lot of sand to allow worker access during construction. It is a weekend home. If the owner were instructed, encouraged by the homeowner association to do a better job it might help. The swales are only a part of the solution. The crown that directs water where it is supposed to go is the major issue. A better contractor for road maintenance might help too. Selectman Sabourn stated there should be a swale to redirect the water before it gets to the street. It should not come into the street. Mr. Stockwell inquired what else they could do. It was noted that the developer had addressed the other issues asked of them. Headwalls on the culvert where Hidden Acres Road comes into Mill Brook Road need to be improved. If the actions already taken alleviate the drainage issue then it won't be an issue for the town to accept the road. The basic problem is the board does not believe that those actions will work, and we don't have the expertise to make that call. It is in the associations and homeowners best interest to resolve it. The road agent confirmed that the headwalls and driveway drainage are the only issues left to be resolved. Selectman Sabourn stated it was the will of the voters to accept it as a town road, but the board does not want to accept it for the town until the problems have been resolved. He encouraged them to seek some professional help to advise you on a solution. Relocating the driveway to the back of the lot to the other road may be the best alternative, but it is not a call of the board. Ultimately the developer is still involved and should be made a part of the solution.

Jim Manning stated that living on Hidden Acres Road he had hired the same plow operator as maintained the road and was left captive due to lack of driveway maintenance. He over sanded and didn't plow to the pavement. Water went into tire ruts and there was a lot of sand. If the homeowners came to the board with a civil engineer, would the town be willing to review it with them before doing anything. Selectman Sabourn responded NO. The board is not qualified, we are not engineers. He suggested taking it to a local contractor whose work they trust. The board just want it fixed so the town doesn't inherit a problem that can't be resolved for the town.

Jim Demeritt stated the longer it is prolonged, the more likely it is that there will be more issues with needed road repairs.

There were some terrible storms with rain afterwards. It was a bad winter. A good plowing contractor needs to get the snow back past the ditches so that the road can drain. This winter there was ice everywhere. Perhaps a good plowing contractor will prove that the road is okay as built, but that is why the board needs to see the road go through another winter.

8:00 Assessing – Steve Twohig stated he has had a couple of run-ins with “the girls in the office” when applying for permits. He purchased a burned out 2 bedroom house with an existing in-law apartment in the basement across from dump in 1998. He moved here in 2002. When he came to the town hall and told Marianne that the apartment going great. Candy said he couldn’t do it. The Selectman sent a letter with Candace name on it and mailed registered mail that there would be trouble if he continued. Since 2002 he found out that the town has a 5 year assessing plan. He has been reassessed each year. In 2007 got tax a bill and didn’t like some of the measurements and did an abatement form. David Woodward went through house and made some changes. Measurements are from outside. There are 2’ thick walls on the basement apartment. Dave gave a % off for depreciation. There is a cantilevered roof over a back porch. Dave told him because of the changes his taxes are going to go down. When he got a new tax bill the taxes went up. Selectman Sabourn responded that the assessing firm can’t tell you what the taxes are going to be. They are professional appraisers. He suggested that Avitar come back as they have offered and look at the parcel again and see if they concur.

Mr. Twohig continued he got a revised layout in 2008. An abatement form was filed Mon-Tue for a landing. He called back later and asked Marianne to cancel the abatement. She was not sure if she could or if it had already gone to the assessors. Selectman Gross informed Mr. Twohig that if he didn’t answer the door when the assessor came to review the parcel it opens up the entire parcel to review. Mike from Avitar has said that they would review the property with Mr. Twohig. Selectman Gross continued there are not supposed two dwellings on the parcel due to the acres. Selectman Sabourn recommended Mr. Twohig meet with Mike from Avitar on Friday. We can not change the value without his review.

Mr. Twohig continued that the time constraint for his reviews is fishy. Mr. Demeritt stated that Mr. Twohig’s house was not complete so pickups are automatic. There is no letter of notice given when the building is revisited because it has not been completed.

Mr. Twohig agreed to meet with Mike from Avitar on Friday.

8:30 Road Agent Tom Dubey gave the board copies of a proposed driveway permit to review before submitting it to the planning board. Selectman Sabourn stated he may want to consider allowing for a deeper setback on the ditch line, if it seems that they should be deeper.

The RA stated that Tim Reynolds has a trailer that has \$6K-10K worth of galvanized guardrail parts that he wants to give the town. It will cost about \$500 for Kirks to move it to the highway garage. Mr. Reynolds does not want the trailer back. The trailer could

be used for additional storage and is separated into several bins. Selectman Gross asked if the purchase would fit into the budget. YES Acquisition and transport APPROVED (x3)

Cruiser bid – One bid was received from David Hilliard for \$1,750 for the 2004 Crown Victoria Cruiser, as is, where is, with no warranties implied or expressed. ACCEPTED (x3)

There will be an employee meeting at 9AM Thursday June 12 to discuss possible health insurance coverage changes that the board is considering.

Fire Commissioners – Commissioner Demeritt stated that fuel costs are hurting the fire department. Changes had to be made in the new fire truck. There will be no change in the cost of the truck although it had to be increased in length by 4'. Chief Tobine says it will fit in the firehouse.

Chickenboro Road – Selectman Sabourn looked at the road. The two new driveways coming off the road across from the Baldwin residence do have drainage issues onto the town road. A ditch line needs to be established. The RA will be talking with the owners of the driveways. There needs to be a divot at base of driveway to direct the drainage into some additional ditching.

On Mr. Silva's end of the road the ditches were open, turn around graded, and it is in adequate condition for access to one house. The road was crowned.

Selectman Sabourn spoke with Bob Cawley. He suggested Tommy Dovahulok a someone with extensive grader experience.

The board is researching comp time and on call time policies and how they are being handled in other towns.

Planning Board meeting 6/19 – The board discussed a new subdivision of 18 lots for Phase 1 of Old Sawmill Development. They are concerned with the bridge construction, concrete, engineering and stress test specifications and reports on the bridge as it is the only access to the subdivision. Mr. Demeritt agreed covered bridges are nice but... Selectman Sabourn stated the PB needs a bridge inspection with a professional engineer's signature and stress tests on concrete. It should have a concrete deck or fire suppression on the bridge otherwise it could potentially strand anyone in the subdivision. Subdivision should not be approved before these things are taken care of.

Jim Demeritt asked the prognosis of the covered bridge on mill brook. Is there anything in writing that could be put the Master Plan and CIP updates. They need to have their work completed by December.

Selectman Sabourn stated the board and RA did meet with an engineer. The engineer suggested that the town ask the wetlands board for permission to do emergency repair/maintenance on the bridge. As part of that we should try to get on the state's list

for refurbishment of the bridge. The NHDOT will be reviewing the bridge again this fall. Some measurements and pictures were taken. The engineer will get back to us with possibilities. We would need to go to bid if improvements are approved. Addition of rip rap and the addition of concrete were possibilities suggested. All agreed that it is going to be a perpetual problem for flow issues in the long term if the kink isn't taken out of the river.

Selectman Parziale commented that the Fire Chief has said he has concerns about fire trucks fitting through the bridge.

Jim Demeritt asked if there was any news on the 2007 audit report. NO

Selectman Sabourn noted that there is pending legislation relative to hazardous buildings that allows towns to put lien on that property and other property owned by the same party.

Mr. Demeritt stated that parking at the ball field is a problem. Is it possible that town could abate some taxes on a parcel across the way for parking? The board expressed concern that we would still have issues with kids crossing the road and we would have to purchase the whole parcel as the area near the road is the only area that would support a building. The board should give the current negotiations for land a chance.

**APPROVALS:**

**Building Permit:**

15 6 4-2	R.Larochelle	house w/attached garage
3 7 3	R&T Sabourn	12x12 shed addition
8 6 1	C&S Harrison	28x28 barn
11 1 139	R.Sullivan	log home
16 6 5	P&C Uhlman	14 x 20 wood shed

**Abatement:**

4 1 4	J&M Robertson	\$105.00
6 8 8	W. Plaisted	\$237.00
6 10 14	R&F Rodrigue Trust	\$400.00
13 10 2	P&D Bakerian	\$361.00
6 5 1	C&L&A Pitman	\$171.00
15 1 50*	D.Trust	\$1245.00

**Intent to Cut**

16 7 45	G.Sampson
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9:20 It was Moved to enter non public session pursuant to RSA 91A:3 relative to a personnel issue. 10:15 The board returned to public session. It was moved to seal the minutes of the non public session. PASSED (x3)

10:17 It was moved to adjourn. PASSED (x3)

**The next scheduled Selectmen's Meeting  
Will be  
June 25, 2008  
9:00 AM at the Municipal Building**