

Strafford Selectboard Meeting
November 14, 2018

Members present: Brian Johnson, Kate Siepmann, Toni Pippy, John Freitag, Lauri Berkenkamp

Other citizens present: Gil Robertson; Steve Marx; Lisa Bragg, Town Clerk; Jon MacKinnon, Road Foreman; Shawn Harlow, Strafford Volunteer Fire Department

1. Citizens' Concerns

Steve Marx updated the board regarding the Coutermarsh property on Miller Pond. The property is being cleaned up, with more to go.

2. Town Highways and Equipment Update

Budget for sand and gravel: Highway budget is on track

Truck bid: Specs were put out to bid and the Town advertised on several sites. Bids are due November 28. Jon will also price out an additional belly blade for the new truck.

Sidewalk snow removal: Brian has spoken to the contractor about keeping the sidewalks clear without damaging them.

Projects remaining: most of the projects are complete. The road crew is finishing as much as possible. The culverts on the Mine Road may not be done this year so the road crew might touch up the road until the EPA can get to them next spring.

Town Highway 14: discussion regarding town's responsibilities to check on state of the trail after logging. No action is required at this time.

New hire update: New employee is working out well.

3. Approve Minutes of October 24

Minutes were moved, seconded, and approved with no changes.

4. Correspondence

Email from Bill Burden re: hazard mitigation grants. Email was received.

Email from John Sakalowsky re: Furnace Flat Road issue. Toni will respond.

John Whelihan re: Upper Valley ambulance. The rate for ambulance services in 2019 will go up 2.5 percent (to \$44 per capita).

Emails from Beth Preston, Rocky Fuller, and Steve Willbanks re: parking around Town House.

John F. will draft an agreement between town and Lucy Hemenway to allow people to park behind the Town House, as has been done for many years.

Jill Michaels re: sidewalk snow removal. Issue has been addressed

Emails from Steve Willbanks, Mike Heb re: Town Highway 14. This issue discussed above.

Letter from Ann Hollinger re: Town Highway 14. This issue discussed above.

Email from Rebecca Seibel re: Community Building Award. The committee recommended splitting the award between Strafford Fire and Rescue and Hazel Lewis for her lifetime contributions to the people of Strafford. Motion was made, seconded, and passed to split the award between the two parties.

Richard Amore RE: Better Connections Grant Program. Email was received by the board.
Email from Shawn Harlow re: Hanover Dispatch Meeting—Dispatch rate and fees will go up in 2019. Currently we contract with Hanover dispatch. In the past the town has paid about \$2800 per year to Town of Hanover for fire department and FAST squad dispatching fees. The fee will be \$11,572 in fiscal 2020 (July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020). Although the town could go with Hartford’s dispatch services, Hartford’s flat fee begins at \$10,000 and the downside to switching to Hartford dispatch would be some fees for a one-time communications set-up and equipment. Town will work to include the increase in the fire department’s budget.
Email from Gus Speth RE: request that the board write a letter to the Town of Thetford about the repairs to fix Rte 132. Kate will respond to Gus.
Email from Ed Hathaway RE: update on current conditions at Elizabeth Mine. Board received email.

5. Whitcomb Hill Management Plan review and adoption

Motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the Strafford Conservation’s Whitcomb Hill Management Plan with minor edits (page 1, line 6/7 under Management Responsibilities). Kate will contact the commission regarding the edit and note approval.

6. General

Liaison updates: Rec Board and Law Enforcement budgets are requesting to be level-funded.
Update on pole removal: Received email from Clay Purvis stating this is being worked on.
EC Fiber representative appointment: Chuck Sherman is available and willing to serve on EC Fiber’s board. Board moved, seconded, and approved Chuck’s appointment as an alternate representative to the EC Fiber board.

7. Other

Assignment of 911 numbers: There is an impending problem with the assignment of new 911 numbers on roads that straddle two towns. Board will do more research on this and will request a representative from Vermont 911 to come to a meeting to discuss redundancy in numbering between towns.
Neighbor Helping Neighbor had put out a notice requesting donations for attorney fees for a resident. That has been covered by a pro bono attorney. The organization will either refund donations or will put the donations toward a fuel fund for the family.
Board should look at roads and trails, review policies, and discuss how to allocate resources appropriately.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauri Berkenkamp
Recording Clerk