



Town of Lee Board of Public Works
MEETING MINUTES of April 25, 2023
Town Hall Courtroom

Members Present: Clerk David Forrest, Gary O'Brien, Robert Wright, Jim Ethier

Others Present: Superintendent Lenny Tisdale, Town Administrator Chris Brittain, Highway Supervisor Zach Sorrentino

Water Department

Administrative Assistant Sam Lovett provided an update on Water/Sewer Billing and the status of Radio Transmitter Swaps. This quarter's billing went out on April 26, 2023. This included the current water bill and the 2022 Water Quality report. There are approximately 210 residents with outdated radios which need to be replaced prior to July 1, 2023.

During a snow storm in March 2023, the water plant lost power and while the generator started, it lost power soon after. The Town relied on its water reserve tanks for two days before power was restored. Local electric company Andrus Power Solutions stated that the generator is not worth fixing. It was determined that it is controls issues, not the engine that caused the generator to fail. It is a Cat generator that is 17 years old. It receives monthly preventative maintenance as well as twice-yearly inspections. The Town was never notified of any issues during these regular inspections. The size of the generator also causes problems when it comes to maintenance. Town Administrator Chris Brittain added \$147,000 to the town warrant for appropriation so that the Town will have the ability to buy a new generator, but if it is deemed not necessary, the funds do not need to be used. Clerk Forrest stated that he doesn't like Andrus, that they haven't been very good, and they are too expensive. He inquired as to whether we have an electrician to call in emergencies or a rental firm for a short-term solution. Clerk Forrest recommended reaching out to Berkshire County to get prices for a local business that the Town could call for emergencies.

Clerk Forrest raised concern about the staffing for the Water Department. Retired Supervisor Mike Towler has yet to be replaced, he still fills in a few days a week. One person applied for the position but did not have the required licenses.

Clerk Forrest provided insight into his situation and stated that he does not like receiving second-hand information. He wants to receive weekly updates from all departments in the DPW.

It has been discovered that there is a large leak in the waterline on East Street. Tighe & Bond, an engineering firm responsible for the plans to replace waterlines, wants to shut down the line and have the residents who are tied in to connect to a newer line. The existing 12" line is over 130 years old, over a mile long, and is not looping properly so the water is becoming stagnant before it reaches the houses. Clerk Forrest inquired as to whether Superintendent Len Tisdale has approached former Water Department employees to gain more information.

Other residents attached to that line are okay being moved over to a line on Rose Avenue. Tisdale reinforced that there are leaks on that line, and there have been for a long time. The leaks were only found when the Town had Jim Leahy excavate the waterway. Superintendent Tisdale has calls into JS Rae and Wilkinson's for pricing to tie residents on the old line into the new one. However, it will have to go out to bid because it will cost more than \$10k.

The watermain replacement project for Railroad St and Robert St will be going out to bid after Town Meeting in May. The project is still waiting for affirmation of funds, which will be determined by Town Meeting. The project totals \$1.3 million, \$800K of which will be covered by ARPA funds, the remainder will be Enterprise funds.

Highway/Cemetery Department

Clerk Forrest questioned the paving that took place on Lander Road last fall. Superintendent Tisdale explained that the section of Lander was paved due to scouring, bowling ball sized rocks coming off the hill, and it is the Town right of way.

An issue was raised about the differential settlement on Church St. There was a utility cut made to tap in to Town water and sewer which led to, essentially, the road sinking. It was discussed that, as a part of the utility cut permit, that the homeowner or contractor buy a cash bond to be held for one year, the time that the road will see the differential settlement. The contractor and/or homeowner will be responsible for fixing the road after that time, similar to the deposit made for curb cuts, before the bond will be released.

Clerk Forrest raised concern about the beaver dam that has been built on Greylock Street. Superintendent Tisdale informed the Board that Brian Fenner is tasked with trapping the beavers as well as removing the dam.

Clerk Forrest recalled a conversation he had with Superintendent Tisdale about structures, Tisdale reported that he had pulled man covers to determine any adjustments that will need to be made during this year's paving.

Clerk Forrest reported that he does not think the Town should be done with sweeping, starting at the beginning of Summer Street. The driveway located there causes gravel to come into the road every time that it rains. The sweeper attachment had been bought from Robert Piccolo. It was a 60" broom, but the Board was informed that it would work at an angle.

Highway Supervisor Zach Sorrentino reported that he is getting the final figures on the new cemetery mower this week. Clerk Forrest also asked which trucks Mr. Sorrentino has decided to get rid of from the Highway Department fleet. Mr. Sorrentino indicated that 2 F-150s, an F750 (White Lightning), and the sweeper will be done away with. Clerk Forrest recommended that the DPW put a cap on what and how much will be spent to fix trucks.

Mr. Sorrentino expressed concerns over the inconsistency of Town right of ways when determining tree removal. Some roads indicate that the right of way is one length, i.e. 50 ft, meaning 25 ft from the center of the road on each side, and anything that falls within that framework is the responsibility of the Town to maintain. Other roads are listed as 50ft-70ft, with no determination as to what sections of road are 50ft or 70ft. The Board indicated that Supervisor Sorrentino will have to find a happy medium. Clerk Forrest recommended that the issue be brought to

the attention of the town council, Jeremia Pollard. After receiving a response from Pollard, Forrest said to add it to the agenda for another meeting of the Board of Public Works.

Waste Water Department

NA

Capacity Permits

Morrison's Home Improvement applied for a capacity permit for a new build at 401 Stockbridge Rd. Gary O'Brien makes a motion to approve the capacity permit, Rob Wright seconded the motion, it was passed unanimously (4-0).

Minutes

Jim Eithier made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 28th meeting. Gary O'Brien seconded; it was passed unanimously (4-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Lovett