



Town of Lee Board of Public Works
MEETING MINUTES of June 12, 2023
Town Hall Courtroom

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

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

The meeting was called to order by Clerk David Forrest at 1:19pm.

Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the May 8th meeting of the Board of Public Works by Clerk David Forrest. Jim Ethier seconded the motion, it was passed unanimously (4-0).

Water Department

Robert St and Railroad St Water Main Project Discussion – The Railroad and Robert St Water Main project went out to bid and the list of bid amounts was provided to the Board. Superintendent Tisdale reported that it came under budget with the lowest bidder. There was discussion of great length over the validity of Tighe & Bond's plan to replace the line. Town Administrator Chris Brittain provided the Board with a photo of the pipe that the new line will be tied into. Clerk Forrest expressed his displeasure at the state of the line and questioned the engineering firm's competency. He said that the bidding process should go on, but to let them know the Board still has reservations. He does not want to delay the process but indicated that he was uncomfortable. Clerk Forrest also questioned the flow test performed by Tighe & Bond. Tisdale reported that the test was performed as though it was originally a 12 inch line that had tuberculated down to an 8 inch line. The flow study revealed that the flow was 10 or 12 inches. He recommended that Clerk Forrest speak with Sam Nyser, the engineer from Tighe & Bond. Gary O'Brien chimed in that they have a good reputation; they work with many towns and cities. Clerk Forrest aired his concerns that the engineering firm is working in their own interest with no concern for the Town's needs. He also indicated that the Board should be going by Superintendent Tisdale's recommendation. Superintendent Tisdale advocated for the plan that Water Supervisor Mike Towler and Tighe & Bond suggested.

Highway/Cemetery Department

Town Mechanic Position – In this difficult hiring climate, the Town hopes to adjust the Highway Mechanic/Truck Driver/Laborer position to a non-union position in which the employee would serve as a mechanic not only for the DPW, but the Lee Police Department as well as the Lee Fire Department. Gary O'Brien voiced his approval of this plan. If the plan were to go through the town would consider the purchase of a service truck so the mechanic will be more mobile.

Paving Update

The Town is still waiting for the transportation bond to be passed and the Governor needs to approve the budget. Until that has passed, the Town is unable to go out to bid for these paving projects to be completed.

Clerk Forrest asked about a possible grant for swamp excavation, explaining that he had received the information from Superintendent Tisdale. Superintendent Tisdale informed him that grants will only cover stream crossings and culverts, but nothing for retention ponds or brooks. He also mentioned that the DEP would never allow that.

Clerk Forrest also asked for an update on the new mower for the DPW. Highway Supervisor Zach Sorrentino had contacted Pittsfield Lawn & Tractor (PLT) and reported that the specialty deck that was requested will delay the arrival of the mower until July. Clerk Forrest questioned the need for a second deck and Supervisor Sorrentino indicated that the specialty deck was for a collection system which is the reason a new mower was purchased. The other deck is for rear discharge which is required for mowing in the Cemetery. Clerk Forrest asked why the collection system was necessary if the Town had other mowers with that capability and questioned the ease of changing the deck. He commented that while the discussion of a mower purchase had taken place during various Board meetings, the specs of the purchase had not been examined. The existing mower is being transferred to the Waste Water Treatment Plant and that mower will be moved to the Water Treatment Plant.

Clerk Forrest inquired of the status of negotiations with Fox Hollow saying that he wants to get it taken care of sooner rather than later. TA Brittain is working with counsel and the treasurer on the matter.

Waste Water Department

N/A

Capacity Permits

160 High St

A Capacity Permit application was submitted by Steve Seltzer for 160 High Street. It is a change of use permit as the former church has been remodeled to include 4 bedrooms. The capacity fees have been paid in full and after discussion, Robert Wright made a motion to approve the permit. Gary O'Brien seconded the motion and it passed unanimously (4-0).

Abatements

35 Prospect St

An abatement application was submitted for Jean Tatro at 35 Prospect St. The residence experienced a broken pipe which flooded the basement. They called for assistance from the Lee Fire Department to pump out the water. Glenn Wilcox was able to fix the issue. After discussion, the Board voted to abate any sewer charges beyond the average usage, totaling \$149.10. Clerk Forrest made the motion to approve the sewer abatement, Gary O'Brien seconded, it was passed unanimously (4-0)

175 George St – An abatement application was submitted by Susan Guinan Smith of 75 George Street for a pool liner replacement. The Board reviewed the information sent in by the customer and after discussion, they voted to abate \$67.25 on the sewer side. Jim Ethier made the motion to approve, Clerk Forrest seconded the motion. It was passed unanimously (4-0).

575 Devon Rd – A pool abatement application was submitted by John Sudnik of 575 Devon Rd. The Board reviewed the information sent in by the resident and after discussion, voted to abate \$40.00 on the sewer side. Clerk Forrest made the motion to approve, Gary O'Brien seconded. It was unanimously approved (4-0).

Other

Clerk Forrest asked Supervisor Sorrentino again about the plan to remove certain trucks from the DPW fleet. Sorrentino informed him of all updates and plans, including working with Gary O'Brien on specs of the new and existing trucks. Clerk Forrest expressed concern about the coming winter and whether the Town will be able to have a fleet of fully functional plow trucks, but wondered why the Town is holding on to back-up trucks. The International with the wing is experiencing electrical issues, but Supervisor indicated that there is time to fix it because the truck will not be used until winter. Sales will include the 750 "White Lightning" and the truck that was lent to Lee Public Schools. There was much debate between purchasing Internationals or, as Gary O'Brien recommends, Ford F600s. Clerk Forrest says that the Town needs big trucks. Gary O'Brien suggested the Town fleet consist of 3 Big trucks and 4 small trucks.

Robert Wright made a request to visit the Cemetery and the Reservoir with Supervisor Sorrentino to further his knowledge of the Department of Public Works. Jim Ethier requested to join the field trip.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Robert Wright at 2:23 PM, Gary O'Brien seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Lovett