



**Town of Lee Board of Public Works**  
**MEETING MINUTES of February 12, 2024**  
**Town Hall Courtroom**

Members Present: David Forrest, Robert Wright, Jim Ethier, Ashley Shepardson, Patrick Rooney  
Others Present: Superintendent Lenny Tisdale, Town Administrator Chris Brittain, Highway Supervisor Zach Sorrentino

Chairman Dave Forrest called the meeting to order at 12:00pm.

Minutes

After brief discussion of a small error in the minutes, Jim Ethier made a motion to approve the minutes of January 8, 2024. Ashley Shepardson seconded the motion, it passed unanimously by the members present at that meeting. (4-1-0)

Jim Ethier made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2024 meeting. Patrick Rooney seconded the motion, it was passed unanimously (5-0)

Cemetery/Highway

Holt Family – Derek Holt was present at the meeting to discuss a headstone for his parents in Fairmount Cemetery. He brought a rendering for the stone he wanted installed and where it would be placed in regard to the plots reserved for his parents. Cemetery policies indicate that one family lot can only have one monument. Mr. Holt indicated that this would be the last burial and stone installed in this section of the cemetery. The family plot originally purchased included 25 plots but the majority of them will be left empty. Chairman Forrest informed the family that he is in favor of making an exception but would like to discuss it further with other board members.

Later in the meeting, the Board resumed their conversation about the Holt Cemetery Lot. Chairman Forrest is willing to let them install the stone but the Town will need a guarantee that they will not use the remaining plots. He recommended reaching out to Jeremiah Pollard to draw up paperwork for the Holt Family for guarantee.

FY25 Capital – Clerk Rob Wright, Chairman Forrest, and Gary O'Brien met with Highway Supervisor Sorrentino at the Highway garage. The four of them came up with a plan for truck purchases for FY2025. They decided on an F250 gas powered pickup truck that will have a slide in sander. They had yet to decide which kind of plow would be used. The second truck purchase will be an F600 diesel powered truck with a hook lift body. Bundled with these two trucks is the new holder/sidewalk machine. These purchases are not to exceed \$438,000.00. Jim Ethier made the motion to recommend the F250, F600, and sidewalk machine for procurement. Rob Wright seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Wright raised a question about the sidewalk machine regarding business signs in town. Sorrentino reported that there are 5 signs in town that would have to be raised in order to fit the sidewalk machine underneath them. Some of the buildings include Joe's Diner and the old Carberry's building. While the existing sidewalk machine can

clear snow below the signs, the newer models are 3.5 – 4 inches taller. If the signs aren't raised, the business owners will be responsible for clearing their own sidewalks. Business owner's will be notified of this.

Sorrentino informed the Board that there will be a sidewalk machine demo on February 20, 2024 at noon in the highway garage.

Patrick Rooney asked for clarification on purchasing a hotbox for the Highway Department. It is listed in a different article and will not be bundled with the 2 trucks and sidewalk machine. Jim Ethier asked if it would be worth buying or if it will become a piece of equipment taking up space. An informal discussion was had about the hotbox. This would save the Town money when buying asphalt because approximately 1 of every 3 tons is being thrown out because the material cools too quickly. The hotbox would cost approximately \$35,000.00. Superintendent Lenny Tisdale said that FinCom has already expressed their support of purchasing of having a hotbox. Rob Wright made a motion to recommend the hotbox for a capital purchase, Patrick Rooney seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Bridge Update – Superintendent Tisdale reported that the bridge Mill Street will have room for sidewalks on both sides because MassDOT has to follow federal guidelines. Tisdale said it was possible that it would be replaced in the fall. The bridge on Silver Street is in the permitting process now but has not made it acquisitions yet. Putting it on the warrant has not been mentioned. The bridge on Meadow Street was already approved at last town meeting, so the Town could purchase a permanent easement.

The new Highway truck has finally arrived. Town Mechanic Patrick Li is currently working on outfitting the truck. It is black, stainless steel, with an 11 foot bed and a 9 foot sander. Sorrentino said that the tires will be replaced and he and Li will make sure that they received exactly what was ordered. There was concern raised about the 2 ft. gap between the sander and the cab. Li says that sander is correct so the bed needs to be checked. Sorrentino and Li are looking into it before performing any work to mount the sander. Forrest expressed concern over the extra length asking if the big loader was loaded, would it spill over the sides. Sorrentino and Li are going to measure the bucket. Another option is to purchase extended sides for the shoot which will take up most of the gap.

Chairman Forrest asked TA Brittain about the status of the electric discount. It was passed in May, by June the Select Board signed the contract with Colonial Power, who will be like the Town's electricity broker. Brittain responded that approvals could take up to 2 years. He advised everyone to complain to their legislator, Smitty Pignatelli or Paul Mark.

Sidewalk Projects – Chairman Forrest asked if there was any grant money available for sidewalk projects. TA Brittain said there is a One Stop Application coming up. TA Brittain and Tisdale have discussed applying for Beartown Mountain Road. There is also funding available from Complete Streets. The Town is currently working with the Berkshire Regional Planning Committee to work towards receiving Tier 2 status. This would allow the Town to apply for up to \$400,000 in Complete Street funding for sidewalks. TA Brittain stated that Tisdale had approached the Select Board a few months ago to get the process started. Tisdale mentioned the only other option would be a STRAP Grant which would award one million dollars. The grant is limited to one project and Tisdale would want to move forward with Beartown Mountain Road. Another road looking for grant money is Beckett Road, which only has 1100 feet in Lee. TA Brittain says that Lee and Beckett plan to cosign the loan so the project can be complete. Chairman Forrest asked about ARPA funds, TA Brittain said that all the funds are spoken for in ongoing water projects.

Forrest said that the Highway crew did a great job brush cutting on Greylock Street. He requested that sidewalks be added though he understood that it is a long road and may be a multiyear project. He would like the sidewalk to start at Old Columbia Street down to East Street. The second sidewalk he recommends would be from Bradley St, where the monument is to the Lenox Dale sidewalk. This would also include the Meadow Street Bridge.

Cemetery Truck – the cemetery truck has a piston that is pushing into the pickup body. Chairman Forrest asked if it was possible to box it in with half inch plate. Li stated that he was unsure if there was enough clearance available. Forrest recommended that Mark Saunders from Dirt Digger take a look.

#### Wastewater

Chairman Forrest asked if septic dumping fees were also increasing with the sewer rates for utility bills. Tisdale reported that those rates were increased last year and are currently higher than Lenox and Pittsfield.

Jim Ethier made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ashley Shepardson seconded the motion. It was passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted.,

Samantha Lovett