



Town of Lee Board of Public Works
MEETING MINUTES of December 13, 2022
Town Hall Courtroom

Members Present: Chairman Bob Bartini, Clerk David Forrest, Gary O'Brien, Robert Wright
Others Present: Superintendent Lenny Tisdale, Town Administrator Chris Brittain, Highway Supervisor Zach Sorrentino, Jeremy Baker & Sam Touhey from Water Distribution

Chairman Bob Bartini called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM in the Town Hall Courtroom.

Water Department:

Jeremy Baker from Water Distribution came forward to discuss hydrant flow tests. Companies will test hydrants to make sure that they meet specs and until recently, they needed to hire an outside company to complete it. The Water Department is present at these tests and now have the equipment to complete the tests themselves. Baker has researched other municipalities and suggested that the Town begin to charge companies for hydrant flow tests. It provides essential data for the Town for future infrastructure. Clerk Forrest made a motion to approve the hydrant flow test form and fee, Gary O'Brien seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Superintendent Tisdale reported that the geotechnical borings for Robert St didn't show any resistance at 20 ft and that we should move forward with the water line replacement, replacing the 4-inch pipe with 6-inch pipe. Town Administrator Brittain informed the Board that ARPA funds will cover the entire project. Clerk Forrest made a motion to approve the water line replacements on Robert St and Railroad St, Gary O'Brien seconded, pending further funding information.

Approximately 90 radios have been switched from the old model to the new model, which has a battery life of 20 years as opposed to 10 years. Private Contractors Al Zerbato and Mike Towler as well as Jeremy Baker and Sam Touhey of Water Distribution make the radio swaps as the appointments come in.

Highway/Cemetery Department:

Superintendent Tisdale provided an update on capital planning and future paving plans. There was a lengthy discussion between Clerk Forrest and Superintendent Tisdale debating the pros and cons of using chip seal to pave the neighborhoods in Lee. Chip seal is a self-sealing alternative to paving with blacktop. Several Board members voiced their objections to using this paving method. Superintendent Tisdale provided evidence of successful chip seals in the towns of Becket and Stockbridge. The budget for this includes free cash, Chapter 90 funds, as well as 40R funds. The Board wants to move forward with picking the neighborhoods to chip seal and informing those residents of the process.

Administrator Brittain provided an update on the installation of new street lights. The new LED street lights would allow options such as Wi-Fi, cameras, and would allow the brightness to be controlled. They are also more financially friendly and energy efficient. The cost of financing and electricity is about \$10,000 less than what the Town is currently paying just for electricity.

Rob Wright requested an update on the attachment for the excavator that is used to clear the backs of guard rails and such. Superintendent Tisdale reported that it has been purchased for under \$7,000.00 and it should be delivered in the first week of January 2023.

Supervisor Sorrentino provided an update on Town trucks after the first snow storm of the season.

There is a Lee resident who is interested in forming a cemetery committee to take over the decorating of Fairmount Cemetery. She has cleaned up the entrance and decorated according to the appropriate holiday. She is seeking a committee and a budget for reimbursement for her continued work. Supervisor Sorrentino let her know that all decisions need to be voted on by the Board of Public Works. The Board elected to put this on the back burner for the time being.

Abatements

Overestimated Accounts – Due to the overwhelming amount of estimated water and sewer bills needing abatements, Clerk Forrest asked how this process could be streamlined. He suggested that if the resident gets a bad reading on their meter due to a dead radio, is in good standing and they pay their water and sewer bill regularly that Admin Assistant Sam Lovett can make the adjustments without going through the abatement process. Sam Lovett was asked to keep a spreadsheet of adjustments to provide to the Board. Clerk Forrest made a motion to allow adjustments on estimated bills for residents that are in good standing, Gary O’Brien seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

43 Sunshine Ave – An abatement was submitted to issue a refund to a customer who had overpaid their water/sewer bill and recently sold their property at 43 Sunshine Avenue. The Board reviewed the information provided and after discussion, Clerk Forrest made the motion to issue a refund in the amount of \$1,578.49. Gary O’Brien seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

165 Highfield Dr – An abatement was submitted for a new pool installation. The Board reviewed the information sent in by the customer and after discussion, they voted to abate \$138.27 on the sewer side. Gary O’Brien made the motion to approve the abatement, Rob Wright seconded, and it was passed unanimously.

75 Marble St – An abatement was submitted for an increased water bill due to roily water caused by a water main break. Resident ran their water for extended periods of time trying to clear their water. The Board reviewed the information submitted by the resident and after discussion, Clerk Forrest made a motion to abate the account to the minimum charge, Gary O’Brien seconded the motion, it was passed unanimously.

17 Park St – An abatement was submitted for the 17 Park St Apartments. Residents experienced running toilets making their quarterly bill much higher than normal. The issue was fixed by Frank Sorrentino. The

Board reviewed the information submitted by the owner and after discussion, the Board voted to abate 10% of their last water and sewer bill. Clerk Forrest made the motion to approve and was seconded by Gary O'Brien. It was passed unanimously.

Minutes

Gary O'Brien made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 15, 2022. Clerk Forrest seconded the motion, it passed unanimously.

David Forrest made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 29, 2022. Gary O'Brien seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Chairman Bartini made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Lovett