



Town of Lee Board of Public Works
MEETING MINUTES of January 24, 2023
Town Hall Courtroom

Members Present: Chairman Bob Bartini, Clerk David Forrest, Gary O'Brien, Robert Wright, Jim Ethier
Others Present: Superintendent Lenny Tisdale, Town Administrator Chris Brittain, Highway Supervisor Zach Sorrentino

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

Agenda items were discussed out of order to accommodate attendees

High Lawn Abatement

Abatement forms were submitted to the BPW by Joe Seider of High Lawn Farm asking for a complete abatement of existing charges on three water/sewer accounts. Emily Wilde, the owner of High Lawn was present via Zoom, as well as Roberto Laurens and Caitlin Moriarty. Superintendent Tisdale asked the Board to clarify how far back in time the Board can go to abate any charges. Clerk David Forrest and Chairman Bob Bartini asserted that the bylaws restrict them to two years. Member Gary O'Brien reiterated that if it's two years, it's two years, anything beyond that would be breaking precedent and will create a maelstrom from past abatements. There was much discussion about waiving late charges, possibly dating back further than two years. Clerk David Forrest made a motion to table the abatement until more research can be completed, as well as a meeting between Superintendent Tisdale and Emily Wilde. There will be more discussion for the 2/28 Board of Public Works meeting, leading to a resolution. Gary O'Brien seconded the motion; it was passed unanimously (5-0).

East Center St Sidewalk

Lee Residents Dick Lindsay and Tony Bona approached the board with concerns regarding the sidewalk on East Center St. They provided photographic evidence illustrating that the sidewalk is too narrow, the grass gets torn up when the sidewalk machine is clearing snow. It also needs to be raised to avoid water creating an overflow across the sidewalk. Superintendent Tisdale indicated that repaving the sidewalk can be bundled with the paving of Abbey Court.

Clerk Forrest stated that the culverts on East Center St need to be investigated. Berkshire Gas may need to be contacted in case the gas line conflicts with the bottom of the drain line. Superintendent Tisdale said that he would reach out to Paul Scarpa, an engineer with Berkshire Gas.

Meter Reading and Billing Update

Admin Assistant Sam Lovett Provided an update on meter reading. Q4 Bills will go out this week. Any resident who still has an old radio transmitter (01) will receive a letter that states they have until July 1,

2023 to allow the Water Department in their home to swap out the old radios with new radios (99) or they will receive double estimations leading to a potential water shut off. Approximately 330 letters are being sent to residents.

Drainage on Abbey Court

The embankment collapsed in 2011 or due to Hurricane Sandy in 2015. The discharges and catch basins were backed up. Superintendent Tisdale reported that these were cleared in August 2022. He reported that the culverts were bent, and Jim Leahy is working on the project.

Enterprise Accounts

Town Administrator Chris Brittain provided a hand out reporting on the current balance on the Town Enterprise Funds for Water and Sewer. Board members requested additional information for the last 3 years.

Truck Update

Supervisor Sorrentino reported that the new truck purchased from a municipality in Vermont is great and has been used in every storm since it was bought. One of the big plow trucks had been housed in Hartford Ct at Nutmeg since the first of December 2022 waiting for repair. Supervisor Sorrentino was notified that the repairs were finished and drove to Hartford to pick it up. The truck made it back successfully however the truck died within an hour of being used to plow.

Three CDL trucks are being fixed by Tom Armitage, an outside contractor serving interim while the Town tries to fill the vacant mechanic position.

Gary O'Brien stated that the Town needs money to revamp the entire truck fleet. No other towns are running "vintage '97" trucks. Clerk Forrest stated that a firm plan for vehicle procurement is needed before Town Meeting.

103 East Main Street Connection

There was concern that two properties in the Town of Stockbridge that are connected to Lee water and sewer, were not being charged for usage. Since this meeting, Admin Assistant Sam Lovett has cleared up the issue by determining that both properties are receiving invoices for water and sewer usage from the Town of Lee.

Railroad & Robert Street

Tighe & Bond provided a report with additional design and construction phase services for the Railroad Street Water Main Addition. The Board would like to schedule a meeting with someone from Tighe & Bond for further discussion.

Lead Service Line Replacement

Tighe & Bond submitted a proposal to assist the Town of Lee with their inventory of Lead Service Lines. Homes that were built before 1984 run the possibility of having lead pipes and goosenecks. This is a reimbursable project in which the Town pays and money is refunded by the State when the work is completed. It must be completed by October 2024.

Employee Update

The Highway Department welcomes Paul Polson, a highway laborer and truck driver. Mr. Polson also holds all the appropriate licenses, and the department is happy to have him.

There have been no applications for the vacant mechanic's position.

Complete Streets Program

Superintendent Tisdale provided an update on the Community Streets Program. It is a program that connects communities, ensuring safe paths for cyclists and other community members to travel to neighboring communities. It is driven to get more people active. It also provides the Town with more opportunities to access grants.

Chip Sealing

The Chip Sealing discussions continue to this latest meeting. The Board requested that someone come to a board meeting in April 2023 to further discuss the pros and cons of chip sealing. Chairperson Bartini reported that he is not a fan of chip sealing, the people of Pittsfield were unhappy resulting in the City repaving all the streets. Bartini recalled that Berkshire Regional Planning had assessed road conditions with street scan approximately three years ago but said that the company was horrible. Clerk Forrest said that the Berkshire Regional Report is not needed. Superintendent Tisdale stated that if done properly, chip sealing is a cost saving preventative measure.

5 Park St Abatement

An abatement was submitted for 5 Park St. Residents experienced a running toilet making their quarterly water and sewer bill much higher than normal. The Board reviewed the information sent in by the resident and after discussion, voted to abate 10% of the last water and sewer bill. Clerk Forrest made the motion to approve 10% for the abatement, Gary O'Brien seconded. It was passed 4-0 with Chairperson Bob Bartini abstaining.

Clerk Forrest made the motion to approve the minutes from the December 27th meeting, with a few minor typographical changes. It was passed unanimously (5-0).

Superintendent Tisdale also informed the Board that a meeting will take place with High Lawn Farm about beach access in lieu of water payments.

Clerk Forrest reported back on the meeting with Bob Jones and Chris Brittain regarding a legislative change to BPW act. He expressed concerns over the select boards proposal. Chair Bartini also expressed concerns on the proposal as well as members of the select board. No action (vote) was taken on this matter.

Chairperson Bartini made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 1: 54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Samantha Lovett