

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
MEETING MINUTES
REMOTE PARTICIPATION – CONFERENCE CALL
May 6, 2020

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***Please be advised that by Order of the Governor – Order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law, G.L. c.30A, § 20 which limits public access and allows remote participation.**

Members Present: Thomas Haluch, Barry Linton, Bill Rodrigues, Alex Simao, John Davis

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Mike Suprenant

Mr. Haluch called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M. Pledge of Allegiance.

APPOINTMENTS:

None

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Paving on Center Street scheduled to start next Wednesday or Tuesday. We have had a couple requests for opening the pavement, one from Columbia Gas, one from Colvest. We are working on that. I plan to increase the number of days worked by DPW employees to every other day starting May 11. Work is increasing every day and we need the manpower. Mr. Simao asked how many employees are expected each day. Mr. Suprenant said 6 or 7. They will be alternating until the Governor says it's ok to come to work full force. Mr. Linton asked if they have enough protective equipment. Mr. Suprenant said yes. Mr. Linton said that Ryan says NAPA has the surgical masks. Mr. Simao asked if the people would be notified tomorrow. Mr. Suprenant said yes. 2020 sewer project work, which includes Tower, Motyka and Grimard. I expect the contract for the survey work back from Heritage Surveys. I will call Board members to sign it when it comes in. MS-4 year 2 permitting compliance work. I asked the Assistant Town Engineer to look at reductions in the \$95,000 proposal that we received from Mott MacDonald. He has identified about \$50,000 worth of work that can be done in house. I will review that for further reductions and ask Mott MacDonald to submit a revised proposal. There is a cold in place recycling webinar tomorrow. The Board

received an invitation. If you want to sit in on it I can send you the contact information. There will be information as to why it is better to do that in some instances rather than milling and overlaying. We have proposed this type of treatment on Upper Fuller Road. Mr. Simao said we have not committed yet. Three of the annual rebid contracts have been returned and I expect more to come in soon. I will call the Board members to sign as more come in. Mr. Simao asked how many more have not come back yet. Mr. Suprenant said there are probably a dozen. I will be working with the DPW Business Administrator, Assistant Town Engineer and IT Director to get information out to the public about the dual stream recycling schedule. I plan to coordinate and review material with Waste Management this week. I have a call into Roy Boyer to make sure we are on the same page before we go out to the public. We will be putting articles in the paper and do a press release and robo calls to get the word out. Also will put it on cable TV. I have attached my response to a grievance from Local 98 Union requesting that an employee be paid for the week that he was removed from the payroll by the Human Resources Manager and Town Accountant. Employee was told to stay at home due to a highly vulnerable person living in the same house. I will recommend later in this meeting under New Business that the Board vote to request that the employee be paid and if the employee is not paid within 10 days the matter will be referred to the Board of Selectmen in accordance with the union contract. Mr. Simao said he feels that the Board should take no action on this and refer it back to the Selectmen. They should let us know what to do. Mr. Linton said it was Mr. Debarge who got on the phone last time and basically told us we couldn't pay him. Mr. Suprenant said that if the Board of Selectmen say he is not to be paid, then it could possibly go to arbitration. Mr. Simao motion to refer to Board of Selectmen. Mr. Rodrigues second. All in favor. I have been asked to look into an annual fee for solid waste and purple bags. I had a teleconference with the Town Accountant, Town Administrator and Chairman of the Board of Selectmen. There are 3 tables attached showing the trash and recycling budget for FY21 and a very rough budget for FY22 projecting costs and revenue for purple bags and an annual fee, which is just something thrown out there to show how an annual fee would work. This is not an actual fee, but just a table to show how it would work. The Board would have to determine what that fee might be. If they wanted to keep the purple bag program as it is there is some additional revenue that is needed. A decision on that would be needed sometime this fall. During the teleconference, it became apparent that I will have to do additional research to refine and verify some of the assumptions in the analysis. Also, the Town Accountant has asked the Division of Global Services and Department of Revenue for information needed to ensure compliance with State Planning and Accounting requirements. Whether the purple bag program can continue together with an annual fee was questioned by the Town Administrator. The DPW Business Administrator has been working with Waste Zero to resolve some billing issues and get current pricing for purple bags. I recommend that the thickness of the large 33

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2020 JUL 24 P 2:50
TOWN OF LUDLOW

gallon purple bags may increase from 1.25 – 2 ml. The additional cost is \$.08. I noticed that all of the surrounding towns are using 2 ml. for the larger bags. Also, the neighboring towns that have a bag program have a smaller 15 gallon bag available which I would recommend. Mr. Linton thought the fee would be more like \$100/household. He thought the fee was not to pay for the whole disposal, but just to help with the cost of recycling, then put \$300,000-\$400,000/year to buy bins. Mr. Suprenant said the intent of the first table was just to show what the budget is and what it will be. The total cost of trash and recycling, including composting, this coming year will be about 1.27 million and 1.574 million the following year. If you go to all purple bags it will only increase to \$877,000, though the Town Accountant has quite a bit more than that estimated. We are working on refining that. If you keep it the same as it is now it is about \$75,000 that comes in from purple bag revenues. This would be a short fall to make up for the increased cost in trash and recycling. Something needs to be done to increase revenues for solid waste. It will take a lot of work to get better information. Mr. Haluch said the numbers that he and Barry were looking at would give us \$700,000 and we would continue to have the purple bag available and that would add another \$75,000. That number is a little on the high side and the Town Accountant's is even higher. Mr. Simao said Mr. Suprenant only figured out 9 months, October-June, but they figured out 12 months. Mr. Haluch said \$700,000 is a year. Mr. Linton said the majority of people he talked to do want to deal with purple bags anymore, they just want to pay the fee and end up with a bin system. If we continue with purple bags, the money will end up in the general fund and there will be no money for us to buy bins. We should put the money into an enterprise fund. We could buy the bins by 2023 and keep the existing services. Mr. Suprenant said about 18% of the Town is over 65. Mr. Linton said the average house is \$100 and senior house \$75. We would send bills out in January or February next year and would have to set up enterprise fund at the next Town Meeting. Mr. Suprenant said the annual fee would include the sticker for the Transfer Station. Mr. Linton motion to accept Director's report. Mr. Davis second. All in favor.

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2020 JUNE 24 P 2:51
TOWN OF LINDLOW

OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR'S REPORT: The Department of Public Works Local 98 employees continue to work on a rotating schedule due to COVID-19. Two or 3 employees per day are rotating weekly in order to provide essential services to the Town. Work assignments over the last few weeks have been limited to operation of the Transfer Station and Compost area, funerals, sewer blocks, mowing grass, patching pot holes and emptying trash barrels. The excessive amount of rain over the past few weeks has hindered some work assignments. Once the Governor lifts restrictions and we can safely bring back more employees, we will be able to get back onto a routine where more work assignments can be completed. I have been in contact with some of the

annual bid contractors with regard to scheduling projects during 2020 construction season. As part of the Operations Report at the March 10, 2020 BPW meeting I had mentioned a list of 14 streets as possible road construction. I am looking for the Board's input in prioritizing possible locations so that we may begin to schedule the work. Please be aware that some public utility companies are working on a limited basis. SWSC would like to enter into an intergovernmental agreement with the Town in order to reimburse them for any costs associated with the repair of Rood Street. As you are aware, water gate services within the project we completed last year have settled. The Commission would like to have the Department complete any necessary repairs using our annual bid contractors. The work would consist of water gate adjustments and 1 ½" mill and overlay. The work would take place in the west bound lane from Center Street to 30 Rood Street. Mr. Linton asked Mr. Suprenant to have the budget for the next meeting. Maybe we could look at paving some side streets since we did not use some of the budget this spring. Mr. Suprenant said he has discussed that with the Operations Supervisor and that is the plan. We will have the list from the March 10 meeting at the next meeting to seek approval to do some of the other streets we wouldn't normally be using Chapter 90 money on. Mr. Linton asked if we're doing hot patch now or cold patch. Mr. Suprenant said the person who was doing cold patch thought he had to use up all the cold patch before he could start using hot patch. We are now using all hot patch since the day before yesterday. Mr. Suprenant said he made up a list last week and had the Operations Supervisor drive around. He did not know they were still using cold patch. Mr. Haluch asked if we were being asked to participate in any finances for the intergovernmental agreement. Mr. Suprenant said no. In order for the Town to get reimbursed there has to be something in writing. Mr. Linton said we may want to hire a contractor for future projects instead of them. Mr. Linton motion to accept the Operations Supervisors report. Mr. Davis second. All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Suprenant said we will send out some correspondence to the Union and Board of Selectmen regarding grievance and solid waste and recycling. Mr. Simao asked if bills were being signed. Mr. Suprenant will check on that. Mr. Simao asked how we are doing with the collection of checks at the Transfer Station. Mr. Suprenant will check on that also. Mr. Simao would like to get the summer help to start as quickly as possible. Mr. Suprenant would like to get them in here for May 18. Mr. Linton said the grass is pretty high in the cemetery. Need to get the place dressed up for Memorial Day and some of the monument foundations done. Mr. Rodrigues said pot holes on West Street between Cady and Holyoke need to be fixed. Mr. Suprenant wrote up a work order yesterday. Mr. Rodrigues said on Maple Street when they did the stump grinding, it's blocking the sidewalk. Needs to be cleaned up. Mr. Suprenant said he had a

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2020 JUL 24 P 2:51
TOWN OF LUDLOW

discussion with the Operations Supervisor. He will write a work order up for it if it hasn't been done yet. Mr. Linton said the only half of the stump on Merry Street was done. Also, he thinks the Transfer Station should be opened regular hours starting next week.

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Mr. Linton motion to adjourn at 6:08 P.M. Mr. Davis second. All in favor.

NOTES ACCEPTED:

John

Chris By PR

Amy Kurtz
Clerk