

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
DPW Conference Room
198 Sportsman's Road, Ludlow, MA 01056
SESSION MEETING MINUTES
March 9, 2021

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

*Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, MGL c. 30A Section 18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Ludlow Board of Public Works will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible.

Members Present: Steve Santos, Chairman, John Davis, Alex Simao, Dan Soares

Also Present: Ken Batista

Members Absent: Barry Linton

First Order of Business: Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Santos called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

APPOINTMENTS:

Eric Segundo, Veterans Services – to discuss Veteran's Heritage Grant.

Mr. Santos explained that Eric could not attend the meeting today, however he explained to Mr. Santos that he was looking to continue with the Veteran's Heritage Grant which is a 50/50 grant. The Board of Selectmen are funding 50% of this. Eric would like to continue cleaning the headstones and repairing the ones that need repair. **Moved by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Simao to allow Eric Segundo of Veteran's Services to continue with the Veteran's Heritage Grant. Vote 4-0. All in favor.**

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR REPORT:

New Cemetery: Mr. Batista stated regarding the new cemetery, we demoed the old building that was at the gold range. The slab is still existing and there is a septic tank and leach field that still needs to come out. We will be doing that when we do the site work with a bulldozer. At that point we will pull the concrete out of there and dispose of that and pull the slab as well. We will be working on removing and trimming trees next.

Toro Mower: Mr. Batista stated that he and Steve met with Capital Improvement last week and we are going to purchasing the Toro mower, the 5910 with the cab on it. Capital Improvement requested that we get a quote for a 3-year lease on the mower. Toro gave us a quote for \$41,327.99 for a 3-year lease and on the last year we would buy it out for \$1. The information was emailed to the Town Administrator as well. It is the same as what we had too. Mr. Simao asked if we would be paying interest on the lease. Mr. Batista said interest will be paid on it, about \$10,000. The price would be \$116,000 if we bought it outright. Mr. Simao asked if the Finance Committee was okay with that? Mr. Santos stated that they have not given an answer yet. Mr. Batista stated that the Toro they have currently is a 2003 with approximately 15,000 hours on it and it mows 4 days per week consistently and this will be the third one since he has been at the DPW. Currently the DPW mows approximately 2.2 million square feet. Mr. Santos stated that Kenny put a list together as follows: Creative Park = 40,000 square feet, Electric Park = 30,000, Hubbard Library = 60,000, Memorial Park = 186,000, Nick Silva Field = 102,500, West Street Park = 154,000, Whitney Park = 390,000, High School = 251,000, East Street = 87,000, Baird Middle School = 200,000, Vets Park = 205,000, Camp White = 194,000, Chapin Street School (the old one) = 331,000 and First Meeting House = 59,000. The total is approximately 2.3 million square feet, which is 52.57 acres that needs to be mowed weekly. Since January 1, 2016, we have spent \$32,564.17 in repairs on the current mower. On average we are spending \$6,200 per year on maintenance. In the next 2 years, the three decks on the mower will have to be replaces and that will

cost an additional \$13,000 to \$14,000. We will keep the old mower as a back up as well. Mr. Soares recommended taking the old machine and storing it at Whitney Park so it can be used to mow Whitney, Memorial Park, Hubbard Library and the new machine will take care of the rest. Mr. Santos will look into that and will also notify the Board once Capital lets him know if it will be approved or not.

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Work Orders: Mr. Batista stated that the crews have been busy cleaning up after the winter last Monday. Crews are aware that we now have spring sports moving forward; they will have football, baseball and soccer. The crews have started laying out the athletic fields for football and soccer and trying to get ahead of the curve with the good weather. The crews have been out pot hole patching almost every day. Unfortunately, with the cold patch as soon as we have cold weather, it pops but we are trying to stay on top of it. The streets across from the high school will be reconstructed and we will work on putting in a couple of basins once we know where the drainage will go. Rich has been busy in the garage completing repairs. The smaller equipment is almost complete. Some repairs need to be done on the mower trim, the metal is getting fatigued and some of the metal needs to be cut out and patched. After April 15th, we are going to evaluate the trucks we have. We sandblasted two of the trucks before winter and I'd like to get a few more out this year while we still have funds. We have had a lot of requests for signs, due to motor vehicle accidents or needs to be replaced or missing. Speed limit signs at the entrance of town will be installed. The mirror on Old West Street has been installed. After speaking with Down to Earth in regards to the crosswalk on East Street near Walgreens, they are suggesting we put up an electric light, rather than solar because it will save us about \$8,000 and there is already electricity there and we can use the bases that are already there as well. We will just need a taller pole.

Mr. Santos also stated that the crosswalk signs that the Safety Committee requested are the flashing signs, which cost \$18,000 each. Mr. Santos spoke to Katie; the new Administrator for the School Department and she is looking to see if there are any grants for school safety. This may need to be a combination of the School, the DPW and grants.

Stivens Terrace Lateral: Mr. Batista explained that he received a call from the resident at 80 Stivens Terrace that they had a back-up in December and then again last week. Fletcher came in and camera'd the line and what is happening is their tied into the manhole at that last connection, it's dropped about 3 inches leaving only about 1 inch from the top of one pipe to the other. We are trying to find out where the gas is because our plans said it was 10 feet down at the manhole but Fletcher is stating it is 7 feet down because they could see it with their cameras. We will need to put a box there but Dig Safe will need to come in to locate the gas line. The box will have to be slid under the gas line. I asked the resident to be careful with how much toilet paper they flush until we can get out there. Also, the entire lateral at Mr. Batista's house was backed up. Mr. Batista had a company come out and clear it but when they looked at it with the camera they discovered that when they tee-d up to the main, they cut a square and they just put a lateral up to it. So, we may have to have a company come out to fix that as well.

Tier 2 Reporting: Mr. Batista explained tier 2 reporting was due March 1st but because he and Jimmy had been out most of February, they were unable to get this done until today. Mr. Batista stated that it was sent to the State today and it tells the State what the Town has for hazardous materials on site, how it gets here, how much we have and where it is stored. Mr. Batista is not sure if the State will penalize the Town for being 9 days late with this report.

Local Church: Mr. Batista received a call from a local church asking if they could have the logs that the DPW picks up from the cemetery after April 1st. The church may recycle them to use again for flower arrangements, etc. The DPW will only throw them away. Mr. Santos has no problem with it but did request that the DPW crew pick them up and stack them by the garage and then the church can come and pick them up there.

David Burke: Mr. Batista stated this is a contractor that does work for Eversource and their bonding company is giving them a hard time issuing a performance bond for the Town of Ludlow because they stated their performance is to Eversource. Mr. Batista explained to David Burke that the performance bond has to be for the Town of Ludlow because if something goes wrong, the Town would need to deal with David Burke not Eversource. Mr. Santos explained that utilities do not need bonds but contractors do and if they cannot get the performance bond then they can cut a check to the Town for \$9,000 and then the Town will reimburse them once the work has been completed per the Town's specification.

Moved by Mr. Simao, seconded by Mr. Davis to approve the Operation's Supervisor Report as ready. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

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OLD BUSINESS:

2021 MAY 13 A 11: 27

Center Street Punch List: Mr. Santos explained that the lights on the turnpike during the windstorm, they lost a bracket there. According to Mark Shea, we own them. We will have to have Down to Earth come and look at them because they are currently zip tied. MassDOT sent paperwork to Mr. Batista for the overages and underage's that need to be signed and sent back to them so the job can be closed out. Once this is complete, Mr. Santos will speak to Mark Shea to see what is going on with the sidewalks and the line striping to figure out when they anticipate it will be done. With the windstorms we have been having the new street signs because they are very large and an actual structural bracket was not made for them, it is an adjustable bracket, the signs are snapping. We are looking for a better bracket for them because we already replaced the one at MacDonald's and now there is another one on Harding.

Town Meeting Articles: Mr. Santos explained that the backgrounds for these articles have not been done. The DPW is looking to transfer all remaining balances from Article 41 from 5/11/15, Article 22 from 5/9/16, Article 2 from 11/6/17, Special Town Meeting Article 9 from 5/13/19 into Article 27 from 6/22/20. Mr. Santos explained that in the past the DPW would request a certain amount only for Engineering and when you do that it can only be used for Engineering. These then have to be closed out or transferred. After speaking with Kim Collins, this Article would combine all of these together into one Article for Engineering and Construction. Once this is complete, the DPW will have approximately \$435,000 to do Tower Road, Grimard and Motyka. Mr. Santos would like to have Tower Road as the primary and Grimard and Motyka as alternates depending on how much the bid comes in at. The DPW can only use \$305,000 from retained earnings.

Trash Fee Implementation: Mr. Santos spoke with Joe in the Assessor's office today and Accounts Receivables are done, charge accounts are done and Accounts Payables are done. Joe is now working on the billing file which is a lot of information. Joe is confident the bills will be out by the end of the month and I would like to thank him for doing a spectacular job we couldn't have done this without him.

Sewer Bills: They have been sent out.

New Cemetery: Kenny covered that.

Rood Street: Nothing.

Budget: Mr. Santos explained that the budget looks pretty good. They are about 60% through the budget for the year. Kenny will get a copy of the budget as well. Mr. Santos met with the Finance Committee last week to go over the new budget. There is a glitch on page 6 for the curbing's and road repair; it looks like we have \$190,000 and it should be around \$105,000. Mr. Santos has been working with Kim Collins and Jimmy and trying to remove any line items that are zero so that they can no longer be charged to and consolidate the budget report. Mr. Simao asked if the new employees and summer help was presented to the Finance Committee and Mr. Santos will give the Board a copy of the draft that was brought to the Finance Committee.

Sewer Plans: Mr. Santos explained that David was supposed to have preliminary plans yesterday, however it does not look like we will have them until Wednesday now. Mr. Santos is doing a walk through with David on Friday.

NEW BUSINESS:

Island Pond Cemetery Quote: Mr. Santos asked Dave Elliott to requote fertilizing the cemetery using only two applications versus five. For two fertilizer applications and grub control, the quote would be \$5,680. Mr. Batista agrees to cut back on the amount of fertilization because there isn't any irrigation over there. However, there is a problem with grubs there and if we don't do any type of insecticide you may as well not do the fertilizer at all because they will chew right through what you have. **Moved by Mr. Soares, seconded by Mr. Simao to propose the lawncare program as illustrated to include the grub and pest control. Vote 4-0. All in favor.**

Annual Town Report: Mr. Santos read the report.

Snow Budget: Mr. Santos stated that a letter was sent to the Board of Selectmen letting them know the DPW was over. \$8,670 was for contracts, \$62,919 for salt from 1/29 through today and there are still 200 tons that has not been billed yet. So, at the time we sent the letter we were over by \$20,243. Then \$717.19 was department overtime. So as of 3/4/21, we have over-extended the snow budget by \$20,960.85. That is what has been done and paid out. We still have parts for the snowblower, the skid steerer and the plows that have not come in yet, as well as some more salt. Mr. Santos is anticipating an additional \$15,000. Mr. Santos met with a Finance Committee member regarding the snow budget and he was adamant about not raising the snow budget. Mr. Santos did ask if \$5,000 could be added to the overtime, \$5,000 into equipment rentals and \$10,000 into salt. The Finance Committee member stated that the snow budget is one account that can run over. Mr. Santos stated he does not like to run over but would rather be somewhat close and at the very least would like the addition to the salt.

Sewer Enterprise Funds: Mr. Santos is inquiring about the \$97,500 which is for shared services. It looks like 5% goes to Accounting, 2% to the Treasurer's office, 10% to the Collector and 2% to the Board of Selectmen for a total of \$36,863, then IT support is \$3,264 (2%), postage is \$2,400 (10%), DPW Administration and Engineering is \$42,730 (10%), DPW building costs \$3,160 and Insurance \$6,885 (2%). This comes to a total of \$97,302 and it looks like \$97,500 was budgeted. Mr. Santos stated that most of this is cut and dry other than the shared services.

NOTES AND COMMENTS:

Mr. Santos stated that he received an email from the Town Administrator on Friday letting him know that the Board of Selectmen have been receiving calls stating that the Riverwalk has not been plowed. The DPW does have an agreement that the Riverwalk has to be kept free of trash, debris, snow, ice and graffiti and Mr. Santos was unaware of this previously. It was recently plowed. Mr. Santos walked the entire Riverwalk on Saturday and there was no ice or snow on it. Due to the location near the river, the DPW also has to be careful treating this area with salt when there is ice and has reached out to conservation to see if they have any suggestions. Conservation was unaware of what should be used but did know there was an organic ice melt and will reach out to the DPW in Northampton and Amherst as they have trails and bike paths near waterways. Regular ice melt is \$11 per bag so Mr. Santos is not sure what organic ice melt will cost. Mr. Santos also stated that if this is not cost effective, Kenny suggested shutting it down for the winter. Mr. Simao asked when this agreement was signed because he does not remember this agreement. Mr. Santos stated it was in 2015 and would get a copy of it. Mr. Santos also explained that even though WestMass owns it, the Town has a maintenance easement on it and has to maintain it accordingly. Mr. Soares commented that there is not enough funds and employees to do all of these projects.

Mr. Santos told the Board that the Miller Street bridge had damage done to the expansion joint on Ludlow's side. Mr. Santos and Mr. Batista have tried to reach someone in Wilbraham as well because it will have to be something that the cost is split between the two communities. Mr. Batista is trying to get in touch with MassDOT to see if someone from the state can take a look at it as well. The bridge is structurally sound right now but it's not a good idea to wait too long.

Mr. Santos stated that all of the contracts have been signed except for the tree service, which we will sign now.

Invoices to be signed.

Chapter 90 Project for Pioneer Valley needs to be signed by the entire Board. Mr. Santos has already signed it.

Mr. Santos would like to start putting together some road projects for Chapter 90 funds to begin June or July. Mr. Santos would like to have Booth Street and part of Tower Road done. We also need to look at Chapin and Holyoke to Fuller.

Moved by Mr. Simao, seconded by Mr. Davis to adjourn. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

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