

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS  
DPW Conference Room  
198 Sportsman's Road, Ludlow, MA 01056

MEETING MINUTES

April 13, 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, Keith Ouellette, Alex Simao

Members Absent: Dan Soares

Also Present: Ken Batista

First Order of Business: Pledge of Allegiance

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

**APPOINTMENTS:**

None

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

Mr. Santos read the correspondence letter #1022 from Elena Cadeira regarding the condition of McLean Parkway. Thirteen people signed the petition. Mr. Santos asked Mr. Batista if he has been by there and Mr. Batista said yes and the street is shot. **Moved by Mr. Simao, seconded by Mr. Ouellette to send the resident a letter stating that all of the streets in Ludlow are being assessed and once we receive the recommendations from Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, we will address the streets in order of importance. Vote 5-0. All in favor.**

**OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR REPORT:**

**Crew Update:** Mr. Batista stated that the crew has been out repairing snow plow damage to the curbs and roadways and tree belt areas. The tree crew has been out daily tackling the tree service reports. Mr. Santos asked if Mr. Batista still needs the crane that was approved for some trees on Center Street. Mr. Batista stated they were going to rent a...not a crane but we have to look at the budget. Mr. Santos stated that he has the budget and they have enough to do it. Mr. Batista stated that they also have stump grinding to do and the compost out back. Therefore, we should see what the priority is. Mr. Batista suggested continuing tree work with their own trucks for now and then after July 1<sup>st</sup> tackle some of the bigger ones. Mr. Santos asked if Mr. Batista could put them in order of priority for him because he does have some money left in equipment rental but not in contracted services. There is \$3,000 left in equipment rental. Mr. Batista stated that can be swallowed up just with stump grinding. Mr. Santos asked if the stump grinding will be done under equipment rental or contracted services. Mr. Batista stated it would probably have to be done under contracted services. Mr. Santos stated that they are

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already over in that line item. Mr. Batista stated that it will have to be transferred from another line item. Mr. Simao asked if they did some last year. Mr. Batista stated they did around 80-90 last year and there are probably 50-60 that still need to be done. Mr. Santos stated that the annual bid for that is \$100/hour. Mr. Batista stated there is probably a couple of days' worth of work there. Mr. Santos stated that's about \$1600. Mr. Ouellette asked if there was \$7500 left in the equipment rental? Mr. Santos said yes but that is when we either rent equipment list and for the contractors that bring their own or the DPW just rents their own. If they have the annual contractor come and do the service then it has to come out of the contracted services and that line item is already \$22,000 over budget due to the MS-4 coming out of there. Mr. Santos does not believe renting the equipment and teaching the crew how to run it, is not worth it. Mr. Simao asked approximately how many stumps can be done in a day? Mr. Batista said about 15 to 18 stumps. Mr. Santos asked Mr. Batista to get together with him next week and prioritize the stump grinding. They may have to do some this fiscal year and then finish up next fiscal year.

**Parks:** Mr. Batista dedicated a crew to all of the parks and athletic fields for spring clean-up. They are continuing to clean up the baseball diamonds in order to be ready for April 26<sup>th</sup>, which is the start of the baseball season. A couple of them need to be skinned out and they will continue this next week. The crew is still out street sweeping daily so every street will be done before summer. We are committed to doing this three times per year.

**Cemetery:** The cemetery crew has been busy with burials at Island Pond but they have been doing clean-up as well as grave repairs. They picked up all the winter flowers.

**Trash pick-up:** Mr. Batista stated that now that the weather is getting nicer, people are out more using the parks and the Riverwalk. The crew has been out every Monday emptying all of the trash cans.

**Miller Street Green Town Bridge:** Mr. Batista still has not heard back from MassDOT. They are supposed to go out and do a visual inspection of the bridge and get back to the Town regarding any necessary repairs. As soon as I hear from them, I will notify the Board.

**Crosswalk by Walgreens:** Mr. Batista did receive specifications from Down to Earth. The specifications were given to the Board for the hard-wired and the solar. Mr. Santos asked if there is a hard copy of the quote for hard-wired and solar? Mr. Batista stated that he was told verbally that it is \$18,000 for the solar and \$2,000 less for hard-wired. They also agreed to help the Town any way they could to save money. Mr. Santos would like to have a hard copy of the quote for both the supply company and Down to Earth. That way the DPW could possibly purchase the material this year and then have it installed in July. Mr. Santos would like to go with the hard-wired because the pole and the meter is already there. Mr. Santos asked how readily available the materials are to get? Mr. Batista stated he will have to ask the vendor.

**Capital Improvement:** Mr. Batista stated that they met with Capital Improvement a few weeks ago and the proposal was to replace the 580 Turo with a 5910 mower. The Capital Improvement Committee approved the 5910 mower in a 3-year lease. The lease is going to be \$41,348 per year and they committed to the first year of the lease. Once Town meeting is done, they will place the order for the new one. They will keep the old mower as a back-up as well. Capital Improvement also committed to the final payment for the freightliner truck that was purchased by the DPW. That payment is \$33,000.

**Driveway at 36 Newbury Street:** Mr. Batista received a quote for this project for \$7500 to replace the driveway. He will continue to get quotes.

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**Equipment Rentals:** Mr. Batista would like to get the trucks lined up for sandblasting and painting. Rich and Mr. Batista looked at the 10-wheeler as being the next to be sandblasted. The quote for this is \$6,205 to do this and it's actually less than the last time we had it painted. The work will include sandblasting, primer and paint. There is money left in the budget under equipment repair that can be used and Mr. Batista would like to have it done now rather than waiting until the end of summer. The truck is a 2008 and does not have a lot of miles on it. Mr. Ouellette asked if there was still \$44,000 in the budget and if they don't use it now, will they lose it in July? Mr. Santos stated that they will, however, he believes that it will come out of purchased contract not equipment repair. There is only \$11,282 in that line item. It is not considered a repair; it is a contracted service. Mr. Davis said to just replace the whole truck. Mr. Ouellette stated that they need to keep on top before it gets out of hand. Mr. Davis agreed. Mr. Simao agrees with Steve that cutting that budget in half could be a problem because you still have 2 months to go in this fiscal year. Mr. Ouellette asked if the new budget will be in place by the end of June. Mr. Simao stated yes, July 1<sup>st</sup> and if there are any problems, you will have to wait until July 1<sup>st</sup> to fix them. Mr. Ouellette asked if you could park the heavy trucks for a month until the new budget takes effect. Mr. Batista explained that most of the trucks are newer and have extended warranties on them. The only problem would be if the loader went down. Mr. Santos also stated the road side mower, the sweeper.... Mr. Batista stated that most of those are repaired in house. Mr. Ouellette suggested making a tentative appointment for the truck and then wait a month to be sure nothing else goes awry but to be sure it is invoiced before mid-June. Mr. Santos stated that he has no problem with that but just keep an eye on that contracted services line item. Mr. Batista stated that the last two invoices that should have come out of that line item are the Schmidt invoice and CL Diesel. Mr. Santos stated that they are probably not reflected on the budget that he has because the invoices were just signed last week. Mr. Santos asked Mr. Batista to get with Rich and see if they can hold off on sandblasting that truck until after July 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Batista stated that he would really like to get that truck done now because the next truck that needs to be done is the 200 and won't be as much as the larger truck. Mr. Simao asked if it was possible to get a quote for the 200 and then if they have the money to do the second one instead of the first, they can at least get that done in this fiscal year and then do the big one next fiscal year. Mr. Ouellette asked if the 200 was an older truck? Mr. Batista stated that it is older but it has no miles on it. It was the tree truck and we reinforced the dump body so we can use it to remove logs. It's in good shape and we use it a lot. We still have a 1996 that is in good running condition.

**Personnel:** Mr. Batista read a resignation letter from William Thompson and wanted to thank him for his service. Mr. Santos also thanked Mr. Thompson for his service for the past three years. Mr. Batista stated that Mr. Thompson was ambitious enough that he got his 4G license and did the road-side mowing, he ran the street sweeper as well. He will be hard to replace. Mr. Ouellette asked if he was the only 4G license that the DPW has? Mr. Batista stated that they have two more and we have more interested in getting theirs. Mr. Santos stated that he spoke with Carrie and the position will be posted today and read the email between himself and Carrie. That will be posted internally first. Mr. Batista believes there is one employee that has all of the licensing needed for that position but is not sure he will apply for it and the other PW-2 only has his CDL, he does not have his hoisting license. Mr. Santos stated that they may have one internal candidate, otherwise it will be posted externally.

**Sewer Blocks:** Mr. Batista explained that over the last couple of weeks there has been numerous sewer blocks and he was concerned there was a problem with the main. Therefore, they called Fletcher in and



they camera'd three different locations. The first location was 37 Oak Street because the resident had a block last week and a company went out and cleared the lateral but never followed up with the Town or the resident. Fletcher found that there was root infestation about 20 feet through each joint of the clay tile pipe and that was cleared. There is a slight offset on the pipe just before it goes into the main it looks like the clay tile dropped and it is holding a lot of water which could be a problem. We are just keeping an eye on it for now but in the future, we may need to do a repair over there. It's a little over 4-feet deep. Mr. Batista also told the resident that they can purchase a product to treat the roots as well. Mr. Ouellette suggested Dukes, they will also treat the roots. Mr. Santos asked if the main is in the middle of the street. Mr. Batista said it is on the far side and the drain is in the middle of the road. There is a section of FCR35 that is there, it might have been replaced years ago. Mr. Santos asked if it was on the corner of Oak and Howard? Mr. Batista said no, it is directly across from Walnut. The second location was Green Street and there were massive roots in that line. Tomorrow they will go over there and cut through those roots and flush that line. Once that is complete, will have Duke's go in and treat that main course to resolve the roots. The last location was West Ave by Dover Road and there were roots there as well. They will do the same with that main as well. Mr. Santos asked if there were any other areas that are having problems in addition to the above. Mr. Batista stated that he has a list but they guarantee their work for two years but we have been stretching it out to five years and we just keep rotating the problem areas.

**Moved by Mr. Simao, seconded by Mr. Davis to accept the Operation's Supervisor report as read.  
Vote 5-0. All in favor.**

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Center Street Punchlist:** Nothing.

**Trash Fee Implementation:** Mr. Santos stated at the Finance Committee meeting it was said that Joe has another appointment with Munis on April 27<sup>th</sup> and we will see what they say after that. If the funds do not come in, they will have to use free cash and then reimburse that. We have had this ball rolling since mid-January and it's been terrible.

**New Cemetery:** Mr. Batista stated that the crew has finished cleaning up the concrete there today and the only left there is the pad. Jimmy was going to contact Paul Smith. Mr. Santos stated that Paul Smith is no longer going to do it and Jimmy will reach out to Don...from Sherman and Frydrych, which may cost a little more. Mr. Batista also ordered the signs to be put out during construction.

**Road Street:** Mr. Santos asked Mr. Batista if he has been in touch with Springfield Sewer and Water about the intergovernmental agreement. Mr. Batista stated that he has spoken to them and was told their attorney is changing some of the language. They want to be able to pay Palmer Paving directly and not have the Town involved at all. Mr. Santos stated that is going to be an issue but we will let them come back with it and we will have to send it back because that is not following our regulations. We will have to speak with Town Counsel because he believes there will be a problem in the future with Eversource Gas. Once you make one concession you have opened up the door that you don't have to follow the regulations. Mr. Batista stated that Eversource Gas is still applying for permits within a public way on moratorium roads and we haven't been approving those. Is that still the Board's wishes? Mr. Santos said yes because if we keep giving them permits and they have no reason as to why they are replacing the roads... Mr. Batista is concerned that Eversource Gas will tell the resident that it's the DPW that is denying their gas service. Hopefully the resident will know the whole truth and that there are

five-year moratoriums on the roads and we are not locking them out because they can't put the gas service in but because these companies are not following the guidelines of our permits. Mr. Santos said that is fine and if they have an issue, they can call the office and I will call them back and explain the situation to them. Mr. Santos asked Mr. Batista to contact Eversource and let them know that they have a couple of weeks to this straightened out and get the moratorium streets they did last year. Currently there are moratorium permits being held up right now and if the Board does not feel they are getting results, then they will hold all permits until are patches are completed to the satisfaction. The Board is in agreement with Mr. Santos. Mr. Batista will send Eversource an email in regards to this. If Eversource has any other issues, they can contact Mr. Santos.

**Budget:** Mr. Santos stated that he went to the April 6<sup>th</sup> Board of Selectmen meeting and two PW-1 positions were approved as long as they are scheduled Tuesday through Saturday and the Finance Committee is in agreement. After speaking to the Finance Committee, the DPW will cut the summer help from \$27,000 to \$16,800 for a surplus of \$10,200. Under Waste Collection, the DPW will take that part time position, which was \$23,748, in order to finance one of the PW-1 positions. However, this is \$6,000 short so we asked to put the \$6,000 into that budget for the balance of the first PW-1 position and then fully fund the second PW-1 position which is approximately \$38,000 minus benefits. We are continuing to overrun the forestry over time budget. It is currently a \$2,000 budget and we asked to increase that to \$10,000. The level one budget was approved, which included the refinancing of the two PW-3 positions from last year. Under Waste Collection we took the full time and the part time and put it into the over time because we are over the overtime budget. We will be more efficient with the addition of these positions. Under DPW Engineering/Architectural Services, we asked to put \$95,200 into this account to cover the MS4 project. After looking at this, about 80% of the \$95,200 will have to be paid out because we cannot do this in house. In FY19 they took \$17,126 out of Contracted Services for this, then in FY20 they took \$23,648.12 out and in FY21 they took \$49,194 out and this was done in error. So, hopefully this will be rectified with the \$95,200.

**Sewer Budget:** Mr. Santos stated that some realigning was done and they bumped up clerical because Florence is working five days per week. They are still trying to figure out the rate. They are not sure why municipal buildings in Town do not pay a sewer bill. This totals \$71,934. They pay for water, electricity, cable, etc. so we need to know why the sewer bill is not paid. As far as the transfer that the DPW receives from the School Department, Mr. Santos reached out to Kathleen and will see if the transfer can be done at the beginning of the fiscal year so we can expend it and use it for material instead of going to the general fund at the end of the year.

**Snow Budget:** Mr. Santos wanted to put \$5,000 more into overtime, \$5,000 more into equipment and \$10,000 more into salt. The Finance Committee did push back on this. They stated that if there is a state of emergency then they can pay it back in 3 years but if there isn't a state of emergency then it has to be paid back immediately.

**Sewer Plans:** Mr. Santos stated that the plans were emailed to the Board and he is still waiting for the specs from David. Once they are received, Mr. Santos will email them to the Board so they can look at them and we are going to try and get them out to bid next week. Currently the project is Tower Road with Option #1 being Motyka and Option #2 being Grimard. There is \$435,000 in retained earnings for this so we will have to see what the bid comes in at to determine which way to proceed.

**Business Administrator Job Vacancy:** Mr. Santos spoke to Carrie and the posting is still open until tomorrow. We have two internal applicants and one external that is not qualified. If there are only two, we talked about having interviews on April 27th if that is okay with the Board.

**PW-1 Update:** Mr. Santos stated that the Board of Selectmen wanted it to be a Tuesday through Saturday position but after speaking with Keith Hancock, he said no way. Mr. Santos read the PW-1 contract to the board, which states that the work week must be Monday through Friday. Mr. Santos stated that he is going to go to negotiations to try and get "landfill" changed to "transfer station". Mr. Santos did speak to the crew to let them know that this would not mean they are getting rid of overtime, they just want to have more employees. Mr. Santos will work with Mr. Hancock to get this all done.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Mr. Ouellette stated that he has had several complaints about Owen's way. Since the road was paved, there are a lot of heavy truck traffic which they use as a cut through to get to East Street. The residents would like to have signs put up for deliveries only. Mr. Simao suggested that a letter is sent to the Safety Committee in regards to this first. Mr. Santos asked Mr. Ouellette to ask the resident to reach out to the Safety Committee first and then they can give their recommendation to the Board of Public Works and they can take it from there.

Mr. Simao asked about the bridge at Piney Lane, which was supposed to be repaired a few years ago. Mr. Batista stated that they came out and took measurements but he will check to see what the status is as of now. Mr. Santos stated they surveyed it and the DPW designated it as a covert but then it was designated as a bridge because of the span. Mr. Santos will ask Jimmy for a contact.

Mr. Santos is still waiting for the confirmation letter for Chapter 90 from MassDOT.

#### **NOTES AND COMMENTS:**

Invoices to sign.

**Moved by Mr. Simao, seconded by Mr. Davis to approve and sign Board of Public Works Meeting Minutes of November 10, 2020 where Mr. Santos, Mr. Simao & Mr. Davis were present. Vote 3-0. All in favor.**

**Moved by Mr. Simao, seconded by Mr. Davis to approve and sign Board of Public Works Meeting Minutes of December 29, 2020 where all members were present. Vote 3-0. All in favor.**

**Moved by Mr. Simao, seconded by Mr. Santos to approve and sign Board of Public Works Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2021 where Mr. Santos, Mr. Simao & Mr. Soares were present. Vote 2-0. All in favor.**

Mr. Santos will hold the meeting minutes for February 3, 2021 to verify the date.

**Moved by Mr. Simao, seconded by Mr. Davis to adjourn. Vote 5-0. All in favor.**

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