

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2023
Board of Public Works Conference Room

Members Present: Stephen Santos, Keith Ouellette, Alex Simao, Matias Goncalves

Also Present: Rhonda Burelle, Lee Corbert, Ken Batista

At 6:00 PM Mr. Santos called the meeting to order. All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPOINTMENTS:

No Appointments

CORRESPONDENCE

No Correspondence

DIRECTORS REPORT:

We now have the tree truck back from Dave's Truck Repair. The extra parts that were needed are as follows: belt, drain plug, hose, hose clamp, gaskets, breather tube, heater, seal, fan hub assembly and bearings. Total extra cost for the parts was \$2,658.87 which was already been approved at a prior meeting. Final invoice cost was \$35,711.03. Mr. Simao asked what kind of warranty do we have on this.
Mr. Corbert: 2 years parts and labor on everything including the extra parts.

I had a second meeting with the Director of Public Works in Wilbraham about report details for Cottage Street Bridge, we then had a conference call from Dan at DOT. Key highlights of the call are that the bridge is still in good shape, any repairs will be just that, repairs not band aids to the problem. There are no grants or funding for the repairs needed according to DOT. We have received a price from the engineer that handled the same bridge for our towns last time around. Initial cost for engineering is \$51,000.00, Ludlow's portion would be \$26,000.00. The final cost of engineering would likely be more than \$51,000.00. The bridge ranking is 71, with that ranking the bridge would not currently come up on the states list of bridges until 2033. DOT is unsure, by making the repairs needed now if it would move the ranking of the bridge. The DPW is to manage and oversee the bridge repairs, funding would come thru the BOS if the DPW could not cover it according to the Town Hall. The Town Administrator and Procurement Officer gave Wilbraham permission for Ludlow to enter into an agreement for emergency engineering or repair services to address critical deficiencies with the bridge. With that terminology and what is going on with the Town Hall and the BOS on the bridge stuff I would need the Boards permission to work with the BOS and the Town Hall to deal with the bridge situations in town. Can I get that permission?

Mr. Santos: I would need a motion for that. So basically, you are just going to coordinate it and obviously do what you have been doing with Wilbraham. Have we talked to Town Hall about getting that \$26,000.00 from them?

Mr. Corbert: Yes, so procurement and the town administrator wrote a letter to Tania

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giving her our Towns permission to go ahead and enter into emergency procurement for those funds. I did pass around an email from town hall what their status is on it if we do not have the funds in our department the BOS will take up about getting the funds. I assuming they come out of general funds from the Town I am not sure, I wasn't given that answer.

Mr. Santos: So, the email from Mark states bridge repair will be managed and overseen by the DPW funding would need to come from the Board of Selectman if there isn't money in the DPW budget to cover it.

Mr. Corbert: Which we don't have, especially with what is coming up on my report with the West Street bridge, we will not have the money to cover this in our own budget without depleting our budget. So, at this point I just need your permission to keep going forward I can get you guys more information as it comes in with final numbers. I will just need your permission to work with another Board at the Town Hall.

Mr. Santos: If the Town Administrator gave the town of Wilbraham, permission then They are financing the \$26,000.00. I just want to make sure that it is not assumed.

Mr. Ouellette: I would like to make a motion, that we allow our Director to manage and oversee repairs with the Board of Selectman with regards to the Wilbraham Bridge. Seconded by Mr. Simao. All in favor 4-0

In regards to the Cottage Street bridge, trees have been cut and removed, we had Barlett come out and quote fixing guardrail, the quote was for \$2,970.00 we approved this quote, this is part of the list of work required by the DT to be completed.

Mr. Santos: Just a question on that, we just had the annual bid was the number on the annual bid lower from Premier Fence then it was from Bartlett?

Mr. Batista: We have had Bartlett do accident recovery work for us in the past, we had this quote before the annual bid was awarded, we had no contractor in place at that time.

Going back to the Licensed tree warden thing, it is what it is so we need to have a licensed tree warden according to what I found from the state. I selected Tim Nault since he is the most experienced PW when it comes to trees. Tim is studying for his license the total cost to get the license is approximately \$500.00. I have reached out to the union to see if adding this function to his job would be an issue in any form. I have their response which I have put in front of all you gentlemen. I guess I just need a decision from the board on how to proceed whether it is do nothing or whether we don't have a PW worker do it, if we nominate someone else or keep it the way it is?

Mr. Santos: I would like to table this if possible. I have a boat load of information, we as the board are still designated as tree wardens due to administration of government section 69D.

Mr. Corbert: Would it be beneficial for me to call the state and get clarification?

Mr. Simao motioned to table this until next meeting Mr. Ouellette seconded the motion all in favor 4-0.

Mr. Santos: The other thing I want to address on that is in regard to the letter from the Union. I have some questions and concerns as I didn't talk to the Union representative on this. Mr. Corbert: Yes, I talked to him and that was the Unions final stance on this.

Mr. Santos: It says, regarding our conversation on March 2nd 2023 I understand that you are designating one of your PW4 workers in the tree division the title of tree warden. As we discussed I understand this is not a new position, this job is already being done by a designated worker under the Local 98 agreement. What designated worker is doing it

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now?

Mr. Corbert: There is not, I have no idea, this is their response to me. There is nobody doing a tree warden job right now, any of our PW's.

Mr. Santos: So, this is the problem, this is a new position.

Mr. Corbert: This is their stance on it, that is all I can tell you. I can't speak for this gentleman. I explained to him exactly what was going on this is their response. He talked with the president he talked with everybody over there and this was his response. This is what they gave me to give you guys.

Mr. Santos read out the email from the union.

Mr. Ouellette: I would like to say if the Board of Selectman are the ones appointing this person, wouldn't any compensation issues fall upon them as well. Wouldn't they be the ones that would be doing all this delegating?

Mr. Santos: Correct we would just send a letter recommending someone and stating that all this has been met. I have a problem even telling him to start studying for this because the selectman might say no.

Mr. Corbert: He has a side business, he does stuff on the side, so he is going to be doing this stuff anyways from what I understand for his own personal gain.

Mr. Santos: So then why would we pay for his license?

Mr. Corbert: Because he is also doing it for the Town and it is benefiting the Town if the State says yes you do need to have a tree warden. You may end up saying forget it based on the information you get back from the state.

Mr. Matias motioned to table this until next meeting, seconded by Mr. Simao all in favor 4-0.

I have asked Rhonda and Debbie to do payroll from now on, I ask the board to give Rhonda and Debbie authorization to sign the payroll authorization.

Mr. Simao: Mr. Chairman who has the authority to give permission to do it? Do you or do we?

Mr. Corbert: No you guys have to get something from Town Hall signed, or sign something and send it to Town Hall for the two ladies to have authorization to do it.

Mr. Santos: It is only 1 person.

Mr. Corbert: We need a backup so if one is out on FMLA or something like that we need to have someone else who can do this.

Mr. Santos: Read a loud a message from Kim Collins.

Mr. Ouellette: Who is currently doing our payroll now.

Mr. Corbert: Jimmy our Town Assistant Engineer is doing it now.

Mr. Ouellette: What about if Jimmy is not here?

Mr. Santos: This is an authorized person to sign, anyone can do the payroll but only one person can sign it.

Mr. Corbert: We just have to have a backup to sign payroll should Rhonda not be here.

Mr. Matias motioned to have Rhonda sign payroll and a Board Member to be her backup when she is out, seconded by Mr. Simao vote 3-1 Mr. Santos not in favor.

I spoke to Dave from Tri-State regarding the new sweeper, I told him we would need a discount on the sweeper for the reason being it will cost the Town extra money in having to purchase Detroit Software and annually updating the software. I told him using our existing sweepers length of service as a basis that it would cost the Town approximately \$30,000.00 extra over the service life of the vehicle. He is speaking to the sweeper builder and his manager and will get back to me. I have emailed the board with the engine specifications as well. I have called and emailed Dave and waiting to hear back.

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Mr. Simao motioned to table this matter until next meeting, seconded by Mr. Ouellette all in favor 4-0.

I have a meeting Thursday morning with the Director of Public Works from Springfield. We will be discussing the price he received of \$300,000.00 for the work that needs to be performed on the West Street bridge. We also have a site visit at the bridge to go over the details. I will have more information after the meeting.

Mr. Simao: The \$300,000.00 is that our part?

Mr. Corbert: Our part would be \$150,000.00. I will send over the itemized report to you all for review.

We received a letter from Baystate Regional Cancer program concerning a town resident. The wife of the resident stopped in to inquire if they could purchase a plot for her husband who has terminal cancer. They brought in a letter which I have provided to the chairman.

Mr. Ouellette motioned that we allow them to purchase a plot at the Island Pond Cemetery, seconded by Mr. Simao all in favor 4-0.

Mr. Ouellette motioned to accept Director's report, seconded by Mr. Simao all in favor 4-0.

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NEW BUSINESS:

No new business

OLD BUSINESS:

Board to review the Annual Bid Section C-1 results and award Contract tabled from March 1st meeting

Mr. Santos: There was a discrepancy on the C-1 items. Lee, do you want to explain what you conveyed to me thru procurement there was a cost differential of 6 digits I don't know how you came up with that figure.

Mr. Corbert: I don't have that stuff in front of me right now.

Mr. Santos: Do you have it in your office that you can go get, like I said at the meeting, there was a 6-digit difference and the board doesn't know how you came up with that figure.

Mr. Corbert: Sure, I can go get them. I took the amounts listed for each of the items and the number we came up with is all these columns added up.

Mr. Matias made the motion to approve Palmer Paving bid for Hot Mix Asphalt and Bituminous Material not to exceed the \$1,633,050.00, seconded by Mr. Ouellette all in favor 3-1 Mr. Santos abstained.

Board signed awarded Annual Bid Contracts

NOTES AND COMMENTS:

Mr. Santos: The only question I have is why was the tree cut down in front of Frank's Diner? Who authorized that tree to be cut down?

Mr. Corbert: I don't know where Frank's Diner is.

Mr. Santos: Ok so it is at the corner of Sewall and East, I sent you an email to fix the tree grate and bench.

Mr. Corbert: I either sent you an email or called you about that. The guys went down to look at it and the tree roots were popping up the sidewalk and popping up the grate. We talked about it and they said the only way to take care of it at this point is to take it out. That is the last I recall of that.

Mr. Simao: Did you go out and look at it?

Mr. Corbert: No.

Mr. Santos: The only email I sent you was to repair the tree grate.

Mr. Corbert: I ended up calling you about it, I believe we talked about it on the phone and I told you it was popping up the grate.

Mr. Santos: No, I know we didn't because I would have never told you to cut down the tree.

Mr. Corbert: Yes, because I told you it was popping up the grate.

Mr. Santos: Yes, and I told you just to take the grate out, I didn't tell you to cut the tree. I would have never told you to cut down the tree.

Mr. Corbert: Yes, I am not sure, I don't recall that at this point.

Mr. Santos: Yes, I just have an issue with cutting down trees. I know I wouldn't have cut that tree. There was no reason to cut that tree, it was a beautiful tree under the bench, the tree grate was coming up but the sidewalk was fine, there were no issues with the sidewalk. So, the only email that I sent you was to fix the tree grate and fix the bench because the bench was rotted.

Mr. Corbert: Which the bench should be replaced at this point too and the grate is out right?

Mr. Santos: Yes, the grate is out but it is not a danger, you can't cut that shade tree down.

Mr. Corbert: Like I said I wasn't down there, wasn't that like the first week I was here and Kenny was out, I sent Tim down there they looked at it they said the roots were popping out.

Mr. Ouellette: They were popping up the tree grate which there is no way to really fix that but remove the tree grate. But it wasn't doing any damage to the sidewalk.

Mr. Santos: So, you told them to go cut it?

Mr. Corbert: No, I just told them to go look at it and they came back and said that was the case and the next thing I know they said they would take care of it on a Monday. I think this was the first week I started here. Do you have the email date in your email Steve?

Mr. Santos: I sent this email to you on 2/14 to put in a work order in to repair the park bench and the tree grate at the corner of East & Sewall. I would like to see that work order. There was no reason to cut down that tree, I want to know why that tree was cut down. If we are tree wardens, we were supposed to authorize the tree and that is why I still think we are tree warden, because I as chairman of the board or a chairman puts in the legal notice to cut the tree. So, I want to know who cut that tree.

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Mr. Corbert: And again, I would have to look at the ticket and see who actually went down there and worked on it I don't recall. We get so many work orders that come across our desk on a regular basis. I remember we talked about it and you sent me a thing that the bench looks great other than that I want to say Tim went down there but I don't know for a fact. That is why we have people write on the work order who went there and what time they went there I don't know. Again, this was the beginning of my 2nd week here.

Mr. Matias: How old was that tree?

Mr. Santos: They did it when they did East Street renovation.

Mr. Ouellette: About 10-15 years old maybe.

Mr. Corbert: We will definitely go there and replant the tree this spring.

Mr. Santos: By the picture, that thing wasn't dead. And I don't know how you would look at it and deem it dead.

Mr. Corbert: Well, you keep saying me, let's make this clear, I don't know that I ever said anything to anyone.

Mr. Santos: No, I am just saying somebody deemed it, you can't even deem that thing dead because you can't deem a tree dead unless the branches are falling out of it and its totally rotted out or the woodpeckers got to it. Like the one on Richmond Road, we know that its dead.

Mr. Ouellette: All we are trying to do is determine who said cut the tree down.

Mr. Corbert: Like I said that was when I first started here and I don't know. I would assume its Tim. Tim does most of our trees but I don't want to say that. It should be signed off on the work order who went there and did whatever. Obviously, the only way to fix it at this point is to put a tree in come spring time, we can't get anything that big but we can get something full and nice.

Mr. Ouellette: How would we go about that when we already have a work order to plant another tree. Would you pull it or grind it?

Mr. Santos: You would have to pull it.

Ms. Burelle provided the only work order for East & Sewall in the system to Mr. Santos.

Mr. Santos: Read aloud the work order: received on 2/15, no caller name no caller phone, corner of East and Sewall received at 8am, highway division, Chad/Benny/Domingos on 2/17, repaired park bench and tree grate on corner of East and Sewall. 2/17 repaired park bench. Where is the one for cutting the tree?

Ms. Burelle: That is the only one that I just found.

Mr. Corbert: So again, that is where I am coming back with a blank, I remember seeing or talking with Benny and Domingos about getting that done, they pulled it out and that Chad was already doing the picnic benches we have here so I told him while he was doing that to go ahead and fix that bench, they did it right away and Domingos & Benny put it back in. That's why like this tree thing I have no idea. I can ask around in the morning and see if anyone is going to say anything. I can talk to the guys that usually do the tree work but like I said I don't recall anything specific other than that bench and you sending me that email saying bench looks great.

Mr. Ouellette: Maybe talk to Tim.

Mr. Corbert: Yeah.

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Mr. Matias: Could it have been an outside contractor, somebody for utilities, Verizon?

Mr. Corbert: I don't know looking at the picture is it close to a power line?

Mr. Santos: No that's a telephone cable.

Mr. Matias: Just that we have a lot of people in town working, accidents happen.

Mr. Ouellette: When did our tree truck go down?

Mr. Corbert: Before I was here.

Mr. Batista: It had to be before I went out for FMLA, so it was probably the week before the end of the month end of January.

Mr. Corbert: So, we know how we have to proceed forward, we are going to have to dig the stump out and put a new tree in. I can ask around tomorrow whether or not someone is going to tell me what happened, I couldn't answer that. I specifically remember with his email about the bench looks great, I remember Domingos and Benny going to take it out, came back here. Chad was doing the picnic tables, I said once you're done that you are doing the same thing get the bench fixed, he did that. Benny and Domingos took it put it back in, he emailed me bench looks great and now I am hearing something about a tree so. And I remember they took the grate out., I do remember the grate because the grate was lifted up in the air because of the roots.

Mr. Simao: So, somebody cut a tree because they felt like it, I guess?

Mr. Santos: Yeah, that is what I want to find out, because that is where you are going to get into a problem with the shade tree.

Mr. Simao: I have a question I know we had a couple of snowstorms who is doing the sidewalks? They missed some on Fuller.

Mr. Santos: Martins and some of our guys are doing them as well.

Mr. Corbert: During the Saturday snowstorm we just had we got a lot of complaints about the transfer station not being open, Kenny and I spoke about it we don't have the manpower to be plowing all the town roads and salting the town offices, schools and keep the transfer station staffed. I would like to have Paul put something on our website that states "During snow events the transfer station will be closed due to lack of manpower". Paul said that IT, Matt could actually put that on our Facebook page as well. We can have Rhonda set it up to do Robo calls when storms are coming in.

Mr. Santos: The Robo calls is the way to go, I wouldn't put it on the website, it depends on what we have for a snowstorm.

Mr. Corbert: No, but if it is actively snowing like it was Saturday, like an active snowstorm on an open transfer station day we would need to be closed.

Mr. Ouellette motions to make it noted that our transfer station is going to be closed during snow events. Also, that we have it go out on Robo Call, Facebook and our website, seconded by Mr. Simao. All in favor 4-0.

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Motion was made by Mr. Simao to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Ouellette. Vote 4-0 all in favor.

NOTES ACCEPTED:

_____ *[Signature]*
_____ *[Signature]*
_____ *Matias Simao*
_____ *Ken Ouellette*

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