

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
Special Meeting
February 11, 2016
Slade Building

Members present: Daniel Galante, Chair
Michael Stauder, Clerk
Patrick Girouard
Jeffrey Williams
Raeanne Siegel

Staff present: Anita Scheipers, Town Administrator; Jeannette Elsevier, Town Secretary; Tim Kilhart, DPW Director;

Others present: Scott Culinan

Meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Dan Galante. Mr. Galante announced that the meeting was being live broadcasted on the Peg Access channel.

Open Session: No open session items.

Review of the sequence of events from most recent storms:

Timeline of events from Tim – Fri/Sat morning storm issues – Tim provided an overview. Guys came in at 3:00 am Friday morning, started treating the roads (50/50 sand/salt mix – treated salt) and then put the plows on. 8am: Tim told guys to start heading out to plow when he received the phone call from dispatch about the accidents on New Templeton Rd. Tim told the guy who plows that route to head right there and do that road first because of the accident. Very heavy wet, slippery snow. Heavy rain on Wednesday along with warm temperatures caused one of the dump trucks to get stuck. Thought they could pull it out with another so dispatched one of the other dump trucks to stop plowing and try to get original truck un-stuck. Second truck also got stuck on dirt road, late morning. Needed to send bucket loader up to get the two trucks loose, so now 3 trucks not plowing their routes. Roads didn't even have 1 inch of snow yet. Able to get one vehicle un-stuck, needed to get TJ's out to get original truck un-stuck. Once truck was pulled out, driver noticed wasn't plowing correctly, noticed a pin issue and lost another hour on a welding repair. Early afternoon now, behind and other issues, tractor trailers on rt 68 not making it up the hill. Also had people getting stuck on Brigham Hill. Had drivers breaking off their routes to help out but when it is snowing 2 inches an hour you have more ground to make up when back on own routes. Treated 5-6 times, Rt 68 2 before, 2 during, 2 after. Chief had closed rt 68 during tractor trailers being stuck. Saturday roads were re-scraped and treated. Combination of issues with Friday's storm, the stuck trucks, lack of personnel on the roads due to the stuck trucks, etc. Did the protocols and sand/salt combination cause any further issues? Everyone is very happy with the sand/salt combination but it doesn't last forever. In 5 ½ hours, we picked up 8 inches of snow. Three of the six big trucks were down for a while, two were on the hill trying to clear that. Mike asked about Gardner roads and what they use different as their roads were much better than Hubbardston's. Discussed volume of cars making a big difference also. Some of these roads aren't wide enough to plow and treat at the same time. One route, to be completely treated: plowed, sanded, etc., takes about 6-7 hours. Plowing you are driving slower due to obstacles, whereas sanding you are just driving and dropping sand. Mike asked what is the overall condition of the fleet. Tim stated better than it ever has been, minor repair issues rather

than larger ones. Dan asked how do we stand as far as material supply and labor and overtime allocation so far overall. Tim stated used roughly about 1000 tons of road salt, out of 2400 bought last year. They just got into the sand from the 5000 yards bought last year. Just bought fuel.

Tim to provide a road listing of road categories *best list*. Raeanne asked for a list of priority roads, primary roads, secondary roads, tertiary roads, etc.

Dan asked about communication between DPW, Police, etc. Tim reported that it has been good. Currently, they adjust treatment on the fly, based on storm predictions, etc.

Mike asked Tim for info on last year – salt usage per event – whatever info on record. Looking for data points (review data). How many events, how much salt used last year vs. how many events and how much salt used this year. Pat asked how many other towns in the area pre-treat with sand and salt before the event even starts. How many miles of roads other towns have vs how many trucks and the workforce they have.

Discussion about plows and which is better, keeping the plows on or taking them off when not actually plowing. Pat thinks for safety and wear and tear on the trucks, it would be better to take them off when not plowing. Tim thinks better to keep plows on unless long duration with no storms. Usually about 2 ½ hours to put all 6 plows on, check fluids, top off fuel, etc. to do all prep for storms. Raeanne asked if there is a neighboring town that has a written protocol that we could take a look at.

Turned over to Scott Culinan – disgusted by the road conditions. Works same job in Concord, and thinks our town’s people are being put at risk by one person’s stupid decisions. Provided information to the board, judgement needs to be used. Jeff stated that money is an issue in this town. Scott said he wasn’t talking about money. Raeanne asked Scott if he is willing to share his information to the board to help the town without increasing the budget. Scott stated that he thinks what this town has for money, better things could be done. Mike asked if Scott would provide paperwork, Scott said he loves this town and will do whatever it takes to help. Scott said regular salt works just fine, you just need to make it work.

Pat – library should we add ice melt there too?

Motion: M. Stauder

2nd: J. Williams

To go into executive session with no intent to return to public session, pursuant to MGL C30A, Sec 21, for Exemption 3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation.

Roll call vote: Mike – Yes, Dan – Yes, Raeanne – Yes, Jeff – Yes, Pat – Yes

*******Executive Session Minutes are Separate*******

Respectfully submitted,

Tonya Martowska