

**Minutes  
Nottingham Select Board Meeting  
Monday, May 22, 2017**

6:30 PM Chair Danis opened the meeting and asked all those present to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Donna Danis, Tiler Eaton, Charles Brown, Anthony Dumas

Absent: Charlene Andersen

Others: Town Administrator Chris Sterndale, Secretary Dawn Calley-Murdough, Gary Anderson, Jim Robinson, Dick Hicks, Robert Claxton, Jeff Paradis, Pat Buxton, Dana Russell, Eleanor Russell, Sue Paradis, Ryan Melchionno, Michael Hancock, Dirk Grotenhuis, Joseph S. Clough, Teresa L. Bascom, Ben Bartlett, Michelle Insley

**Approval of Manifest:**

**Motion:** by Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Brown to approve the May 22, 2017 accounts payable and May 23, 2017 payroll manifests.

**Vote:** 4 – 0 in favor.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion:** by Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Eaton to approve the non-public minutes of May 1, 2017 and the public minutes of May 8, 2017, as amended.

**Vote:** 4 – 0 in favor.

**Select Board Department/Board/Committee Reports:**

**Budget:** Mr. Dumas reported the committee hasn't met and he is waiting for the first meeting to be scheduled.

**Planning Board:** The board will meet on May 24<sup>th</sup> and Mr. Dumas will attend for Ms. Andersen.

**Town Administrator Reports, Mail, Signature Items:**

**Highway:** The Lakeview Road project is moving along and paving has started and will be finished soon. Expected year one of the project should be wrapped up by Memorial Day weekend.

**Recreation:** The Fishing Derby was held with approximately 75 kids in attendance and all were happy with the fish caught. The Women's Vendor Fair was held with low attendance, however the approximate 15 to 16 vendors will come back for Nottingham Day; the event will be reviewed for how to improve attendance.

**Dame School:** The town was notified that the Dame School is no longer listed on the Registry of Historic Places. It appears the designation was removed when the building moved to a new location; authorization is needed. This may cause a problem with future grants, but information is still being processed and requested.

**Tax Bills:** The 1<sup>st</sup> issue tax bills were mailed today with a due date of July 1, 2017.

**Appointments: NONE**

**General Business:**

**Roads:** Chair Danis stated the Select Board will review the topic of roads over the next several months. Topics will include the Road Agent duties and position, as well as issues relating to the maintenance of Nottingham roads with the upcoming retirement of Road Agent John Fernald Jr.

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Mr. Sterndale reported he provided the Select Board with data regarding the current status of roads, current duties of the Road Agent, proposed Road Agent job description, and a plan of action to find a new Road Agent. This included proposed long range plans with data from the CIP Report. The Select Board isn't in a position that requires any emergency decisions, but they will need to move forward to make sure there is appropriate time to post the vacancy, interview, and job shadow with Mr. Fernald.

Mr. Fernald reported the tarred roads are in fairly good shape, but will require continued monitoring and regularly planned maintenance. The Select Board may want to consider completing road traffic surveys/counts to determine a more formal roads maintenance plan for future repairs, as public comments do not always reflect actual need. There should also be consideration that gravel roads may need more frequent and individualized maintenance plans than the paved roads.

Mr. Brown stated Mr. Fernald has done the job well for a long time and there should be a strong effort to put down his knowledge on paper for updated town records. The Select Board agreed the Road Agent should provide information about each road in town, the current status and the proposed maintenance plan.

Mr. Sterndale reported the traffic count/survey schedule will follow the current road maintenance recommendations of the Road Agent, as well as what has been proposed in the CIP. Mr. Fernald reported the Select Board should consider the road maintenance plan as a fluid plan, knowing it can change depending on circumstances each year.

General discussion took place about the currently proposed road re-construction/maintenance five-year schedule, the overlay plans, and relation to the CIP. Mr. Fernald stated the Select Board should also use factors such as if the road is a dead end road, the number of emergency service calls, drainage, weather related issues, and road base conditions as factors in prioritization for the CIP. Mr. Sterndale reported terrain and travel speed should also be considered.

Chair Danis opened up the meeting to public comment.

Planning Board Chair Dirk Grotenhuis reported the Planning Board has set up a Road Sub-Committee to review a variety of aspects surrounding roads, such as the Master Plan task items, Scenic Road designation, speed limits, as well as consideration of building biking and walking paths. Mr. Grotenhuis asked to receive copies of the traffic data in addition to other information the Select Board may gather. The sub-committee will continue to meet over the next couple of months to determine needed updates to the Master Plan and will forward any other recommendations to the Select Board.

Public comments were received from Robert Claxton of Ledge Farm Road, Ryan Melchionno of Poor Farm Road, Michelle Insley of Poor Farm Road, Jeff Paradis of Poor Farm Road, Jim Robinson of Gile Road, Gary Anderson of Gile Road, Teresa Bascom of Stage Road, and Dana and Eleanor Russell of Berry Road. Many expressed appreciation and gratitude for the significant amount of work Mr. Fernald has done for the town, including the many hours he worked during nights and weekends that many citizens may be unaware of.

Residents expressed concern about a significant increase in the number of vehicles travelling the road, speeding vehicles by users of the narrow dirt roads, the amount of dust caused by the increased traffic and finding methods to address the amount of dust, safety concerns for students and people walking and riding horses, consideration of paving roads, emergency response delays

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during certain times of the year, trying to maintain a rural town feel, maintaining dirt roads for continuing agriculture needs, raising the construction standards of town roads, finding methods of safer pedestrian travel on both paved and dirt roads, methods to address speeding, and increasing the town priority for road repairs. It was stated the town should consider hiring an engineer to design and build the roads to current construction specifications.

Mr. Fernald stated there are only so many ways the town can address some of the town road issues because a 50 year old road wasn't built in the same way the current roads are now built and planned for, without potentially taking land and/or properties to expand the size of the road. Paving some of the dirt roads would help if the road is engineered correctly, but will become very costly. While dirt roads may need more work annually, the town has an ability to adjust the type of work that is needed on a season to season basis, at potentially a lower cost. It would be too costly to chemically address dust related issues.

Chair Danis thanked everyone for their comments and participation and the other members agreed to start the process for road traffic counts. It was stated the Select Board will continue to hold conversations with the Road Agent about finding his replacements and existing road statuses, the Police Chief will be consulted about methods to control speeding, and coming up with a future road plan.

Mr. Sterndale reported the Select Board will also need to start considering cost estimates and budgets if there are decisions to increase the amount of work for road maintenance beyond what is currently proposed.

Chair Danis and the other board members reviewed suggested job descriptions for a future replacement. Mr. Sterndale stated there is a statutory definition of Road Agent that has been melded into the existing full time town department head and position, but this is the time to consider any changes to the job description. There was agreement by all that it will be difficult to find only one single person with the same type of experience, knowledge, and skills as Mr. Fernald. It was stated the town may need to consider transitioning the current single position into more than one position.

Mr. Brown stated he supported the proposed description and hiring plan as presented but wanted to make sure there was enough time for the next employee to transition into the new position. The other thing the board and town must consider is improvements the existing facilities and infrastructure for the possible increased work load.

Mr. Fernald stated he has had the ability to grow into the current position and duties, as those things have changed a lot from when he first started. The Select Board may find that they need to hire more than one person to oversee the management process and another to complete the actual field work. The Select Board should realize more money will be needed in hiring new employees, as they probably won't be willing to use their own vehicles or equipment. The board may need to make the decision to consider an engineer position, as the current amount is no where near enough to what will be needed.

There was agreement that the Select Board wants to make sure there is enough time for a new employee to work with Mr. Fernald to try and prevent setting a new Road Agent up for failure.

General discussion took place about how it could be completed and any specific steps the Select Board should take in finding the correct candidate, or candidates, to replace Mr. Fernald. This

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included discussion about hiring options such as the types and number of positions, as well as possible temporary term lengths.

The Select Board agreed to move forward in trying to hire for the existing position and determine what else will might be needed as they move forward. Chair Danis reported she wanted to make sure the general public would be aware that hiring a new Road Agent will more than likely mean hiring additional new employees to fulfill all the duties.

Mr. Sterndale stated there is a job description versus the actual job duties, and asked the Select Board to think about expressing their position of hiring additional people for the needed duties. A complete review of existing employees, equipment, and tools would take place for a future hiring and operational highway department plan.

It was stated there is the expectation to have a job posting by June in order to have some cross over to train with the current Road Agent. The Select Board agreed with the proposed timeline.

Mr. Dumas asked to also review private roads being maintained by the town and the situation of Emergency Lanes, based on the recommendation of Selectman Andersen, to review the criteria and assess if they should continue to be maintained. Mr. Dumas was asked to review the prior history surrounding emergency lanes.

Pre-Payment of Taxes: Mr. Sterndale reviewed the process and primary reasons of prepaying taxes, which is paying taxes before tax bills are issued. Many of the situations are created during sale transactions and tax payment agreements as part of the sale closing process. Any overpayment of a 2<sup>nd</sup> issue tax bill is typically refunded so the town doesn't have to carry monies over the end of the year.

Motion: by Mr. Eaton, second by Mr. Dumas to hereby authorize the prepayment of taxes and authorizes the collector of taxes to accept payments in prepayment of taxes, within a given tax year, pursuant to RSA 80:52-a.

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

Route 4 Property: Mr. Sterndale reported the town has not received any new or additional requests regarding repayment of back taxes and fees for the property in the last couple of weeks.

The town received approximately four to six bids in regards to the environmental testing review, and would be reviewed and summarized when Ms. Andersen returned for a final recommendation to hire.

Chair Danis asked if the Select Board could authorize the Town Administrator and Ms. Andersen to move forward in hiring an environmental firm without having to wait until the next meeting. Mr. Sterndale reported the Select Board could authorize action and would email all board members the recommend contract.

It was stated the Select Board would electronically review the bids, a bid summary, proposed course of action and proposed contract. Board members could raise any concern via email in response.

Motion: by Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Eaton to authorize the Town Administrator and Selectman Charlene Andersen to review, assess, select and sign a contract with an appropriate environmental assessment firm, with prior contract review by the full board electronically.

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

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Mr. Sterndale reported the fencing rental option appears to be a better financial option for the town, rather than demolition of buildings, which was in the \$11,000.00 to \$18,000.00 range. Bids for a single year fence rental have been received between \$1400.00 and \$1600.00. The fence would circle around the dangerous areas, without a gate/entrance and the Select Board can re-evaluate any additional action if needed next year.

The Select Board agreed to the fencing option.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Having no further business,

**8:33 PM Motion:** by Mr. Eaton, second by Mr. Brown to adjourn.

**Vote:** 4 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Calley-Murdough