

BOS & Highway Advisory Joint Meeting 06/21/06

Contributed by
Tuesday, 11 July 2006

Board of Selectmen Minutes

June 12, 2006

Official as of June 27, 2006

Board of Selectmen Meeting with Northwood Highway Advisory Committee

June 21, 2006 7:00 P.M.

Selectman Chair Scott Bryer opened the meeting with the roll call. Selectmen Ken Witham, Doug Shaffer were present, as was Harriet Cady interim Town Administrator. Mr. Bryer stated this was a joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Northwood Highway Advisory Committee.

Members of the HAC present were: Robert Bailey, John Lane, Joe Holmes, Road Agent Jim Wilson. Absent were: Marion Knox and Paul Belliveau.

Chairman Bryer announced the Selectmen had a couple items to take care of first. Before him was a note from the Planning board that a letter of credit has been received from the Deer Ridge Development in the amount of \$828,000 to the Town of Northwood. He asked for a motion to accept the letter of credit. Motion made by Selectman Shaffer to accept the letter of credit in the amount of \$828,000 for the Deer Ridge Development. Selectman Witham seconded the motion and Selectman Bryer made the motion unanimous.

Selectman Bryer stated that a lot of the questions in the letter of Kim Shaffer would have to go to Linda Smith and the Planning Board for action. He recommended that the letter be forwarded to those town officials.

Ms. Cady informed the Board that she has checked the minutes for Davlynn Development and found that the Selectmen had voted on May 23rd to accept the bond, so that matter did not have to receive action tonight. She indicated that Selectman Shaffer had disqualified himself on that motion.

Chairman Bryer then turned the meeting to the joint session with the Highway Advisory Committee to discuss information received from FEMA by various board members and the road agent. He turned the meeting over to Ken Witham, Harriet Cady and Jim Wilson who had attended FEMA meetings. Mr. Witham stated what he got out of the meeting was that if you had \$100,000 worth of damage, you would get 75% (\$75,000) and the remaining \$25,000 would come in the year 2007. This is because of the Congressional recess. He used the \$100,000 as an example.

Mr. Bryer asked if there is a town match on the money. Mr. Witham stated no. However he stated that if it was a \$100,000 cost, and the town received \$75,000 and had to put in \$25,000, there would be a cost to the town for the current year, which would be paid by FEMA in 2007.

Mr. Bryer asked how they determine what projects get done. Ms. Cady stated they would be inspected by a FEMA representative who will be here on Monday morning at 9 o'clock to 9:30 and it will be what happened in the town and what problems we had. He asked that I bring in all the bills by road, each in individual envelopes, so he can determine who did what on each road. Then he will go out with the Road Agent, one of the Selectmen and myself and view all of the sites and determine which ones are eligible for funding. If he determines that some of them, we have been considering we might want to mitigate the problem, as Ken Witham said, of Old Turnpike road by having a box culvert installed. If it is determined by the engineer, John from the State Highway Department (she could not think of his name).

She talked with Doug Deporter of Division Six and he is going to try to get an engineer here by Monday to look at the project to see if they think the culverts would do the job. Mr. Bryer asked if this information would be put in writing and Ms. Cady said yes. She stated we would have to have an engineering design and that cost could be part of the cost of mitigation.

Mr. Bryer stated his concern is how they are going to make a determination that a box culvert will do the trick. Mr. Witham stated they are not looking for an easy way out. Mr. Shaffer stated that John Goff of FEMA stated it is their preference; they don't want to come out here again in 10 to 15 years. Mr. Bryer asked if we can get something to that effect in writing. Mr. Wallace who Ms. Cady talked with on Friday said he would be here on Monday to determine all

the projects they would fund, and we would get in writing what they would pay for. Mr. Shaffer stated that this would be faxed to us, as they have heard all the other horror stories. He feels it is a win-win situation, if we can get some assistance we put in a box. The other thing is we are not penalized for the contractors' emergency repairs and things like that. They knew they were repairing things quickly like on West Street or Canterbury Road, if they felt something else should be done. It is a judgment call.

Ms. Cady referenced repairs to Bennett's Bridge, historical, will work within the historical resources; it is a causeway with a stone culvert, with sink holes in it. They would work with us on the design. We also need the bill for the sand for the beach, as they would also be part of that project. Mr. Bryer asked if they should have the town's engineer, Underwood present on Monday also. Ms. Cady stated they are going to try to have someone from the State present. They would not design it, but would be able to make suggestions. Mr. Bryer stated that anything that has to be done will have to be designed by an engineer. Mr. Wilson confirmed that statement.

Jim Wilson stated that FEMA will assess each situation and determine whether they will fund it or not. Ms. Cady stated FEMA told them they will not fund under \$1000, but if on the same road you combine the cost with other projects on the same road, and make it more than \$1000 it can be considered.

If the washout on Harmony Road was under \$1000 and there is more work that must be done on the road it could be covered. Mr. Shaffer feels that FEMA is open-minded, that they don't want to do it twice. Looking at it from our perspective, the more accurate our figures are, the photos that were taken will help, the more factual we are – it is our tax dollar, - if the Feds will kick in money so we don't have to use our money.

R. Bailey asked who was there at FEMA. Ms. Cady replied was Tammy Vaillencourt from Dept. of Safety who previews all applications, and three men. She has the names. The town application was sent to Ms. Vaillencourt. Mr. Shaffer stated they want to move this as fast as possible. Mr. Witham stated the pictures speak a thousand words. Old Turnpike Road really falls within FEMA. He stated he has gotten a couple phone calls from people on the road. He really would like to have the road done. Mr. Bryer stated it was a 100 year flood. Mr. Witham stated he has lived here for 57 years now and he has never seen anything like this.

Various comments were made about fixing the road now vs. doing it under the five year plan. The damage has been corrected now and should hold until the work is put into next year's budget, unless FEMA approves the expense this year.

Mr. Witham disagrees with the five year plan of the town. He is concerned with the safety of children and people on Old Turnpike Road. Mr. Bryer asked him about the people on Gulf Road. Mr. Witham stated Mr. Bryer was out of line, and a brief shouting match occurred between the two Selectmen. Mr. Witham continued to state his beliefs, and Mr. Bryer stated they need to stay with the five year plan that the town voted. Mr. Witham asked when it was voted. Mr. Bailey stated it was presented to the Selectmen by the Highway Advisory Committee, discussed by the Budget Committee, reported in the Town Report, and voted on by the people at Town Meeting and that is the way it is. We are not going to change in the middle of the stream.

Various committee members expressed their comments during this discussion. Mr. Shaffer stated he learned a lot from the report in the Town Report and feels that the plan is a good one and that it is flexible, and the town needs to try to stay on target with the unexpected that has happened. We are trying to work with a working document. Mr. Bryer stated it is not an emergency anymore. Mr. Shaffer stated, no but if we can get FEMA money to take care of it maybe we should do it this year.

Mr. Holmes stated the plan is to put in a second culvert next year to take care of the overflow, unless FEMA comes through with funding for a box culvert. Mr. Witham stated he is not saying the work couldn't wait, but if FEMA comes through the work and box culvert should be done this year. Mr. Bryer stated the repair work done has taken the emergency away from this project.

Mr. Wilson stated if we get federal money, okay we will do the work. Mr. Lane stated if we don't get the rest of the pavement on our two roads, Ridge and Harmony, we will lose the investment we have made, which will set us back even further. Ms. Cady stated that Deerfield's Gulf Road culvert project and damage application has been entered with FEMA for over \$100,000 by Deerfield. She also understands that the State is looking for money to replace the dam there in order to alleviate further damage. She said she told them that we would inform FEMA that that was something we wanted to see done too.

Mr. Lane stated we need to stay with the five year plan, and need to not bring it into this discussion until we know what is going to happen with FEMA. Mr. Witham stated he is not arguing with the five year plan, but if money is needed to do the repair work, we need to shift the plan. Mr. Lane said we have to keep in mind that there is nowhere in town that you can design construction for a 100 year flood, the State doesn't even have a plan. There is no way the taxpayer could afford to design everything to handle such a flood.

Mr. Shaffer stated he agrees with Mr. Lane, but looking at the opportunity we have here, hopefully something will come out of it; the other part of it, the five year plan is a good plan and if we can stay on track with that, at least we have something now that we have not had before, it was something here and something there, no rhyme or reason.

Mr. Lane stated it pays to set aside a certain amount of money to do something each year. If some emergency comes up, where do they get the money – take it out of the highway budget! \$150,000 dollars is just about half of what we need each year. We had an engineer come up with a 20 year plan for the town last year, and we need to stay with it.

Mr. Shaffer stated he learned a lot about the town in that report last year. With the five year plan there is some wiggle room which is good. With asphalt going up in price all the time and we are not going to please all the people all the time, but at least we have started.

Mr. Shaffer turned the discussion to Harmony Road. He was up there in the morning and Jim was there with Asplundh Tree Company getting things started with him, getting the ditches ready, replacing culverts, etc.

Mr. Holmes stated he has something to say. We have a guy who spends five days a week on lawns. I am not picking on him, but he should be doing lawns two days a week and helping Jim three days a week. Get him in the backhoe and get the work done. There is no need for him to be doing lawns five days a week. Mr. Holmes stated he would take the job for two days a week, and would have the work done. Mr. Shaffer said it sounds reasonable. Mr. Holmes said ask Jim how long it should take. Mr. Shaffer asked him for any suggestions he has. Jim stated he didn't know. Mr. Shaffer stated just getting some of the culverts out with the backhoe would be a great help. Can the mowing be done every two weeks, every three weeks? It is a judgment call on the weather. Mr. Holmes requested that Jim take him off the mowing to help him.

Mr. Bryer stated that FEMA will be meeting with the Selectmen on Monday and the members of the Highway Advisory Committee are welcome to attend the meeting. Ms. Cady stated she expects FEMA here between 9 and 9:30 a.m. Mr. Bryer asked Jim about the work to be done on Harmony Road after the trees come down. He stated they will cut out the stumps, to get the road ditched, and some gravel needed. Mr. Holmes said he should get the ditches back to the stone walls, look at what Strafford does, Province Road, etc.

Various comments were made regarding the way the road should be ditched. Jim stated he still has more culvert work to complete. Mr. Shaffer stated the ditch area could be sprayed with hydro seed stuff to help hold the area. Mr. Shaffer said he saw some of the rocks Jim was pulling out of the culverts as the rain was pouring down the road. Need to get the backhoe in and ditch the road.

Mr. Bryer asked about Wolcott, has Jim been in touch with him. Jim stated he will be here in a week or so to measure and then they will decide when the paving will be done. Mr. Shaffer asked if it would be a worthwhile investment to purchase a “stamper” (pounder) for culvert work. General conversation, but no decision.

Discussion turned to cleaning out culverts, which Jim stated would be done when he is finished with the Harmony Road work.. He said the trees were marked on Monday and they are already quite a ways done with the work. He asked about how long they have to leave trees cut down as he has left it by law for the abutters. He said he usually leaves them a week and if they are still there he hauls them off. Mr. Lane stated Jim should notify the abutters that they can have the wood.

Mr. Shaffer stated that FEMA said if there is a culvert in someone's driveway they would cover that. Mr. Bryer stated he totally supports fixing Old Turnpike Road and Canterbury Road if FEMA is willing to pay for it, but if they don't we should stick with the five year plan. Mr. Shaffer and Mr. Bryer looked at the engineer's recommendation and found that Old Turnpike Road is in plan for next year. If FEMA pays then it would free up money, and the money that was planned to do Old Turnpike Road, if we could accelerate some other work. Mr. Bryer stated that Harmony could probably wait because it is gravel, but Ridge Road; if we don't do something to it we are going to lose everything and will have to reclaim the whole road.

Mr. Lane stated that if FEMA will pay for box culverts, you have to have an engineer design the project, have the plan approved, then you have to go out to bid, and by that time it is next year. If it is FEMA paid for he doesn't think it is going to get done this year. FEMA is not going to sign off on that unless a certified engineer signs off on it. Mr. Witham asked about the plan needed, and Mr. Lane stated the plan has to show the cross sections of the road. Mr. Witham asked that the cost of the design could be covered by FEMA. Mr. Bryer stated under an emergency situation the town can accept the money for the project. We have to have a public hearing in order to accept the money and put it back into the operating budget.

Mr. Bryer asked Ms. Cady if there is any motion the board has to make regarding FEMA. She didn't think there was any motion, basically the town is going as far as they can with FEMA to mitigate. Mr. Bryer stated he would like to have a formal motion. Ms. Cady thinks that the advice of this committee would be for the town to seek funds to mitigate the flooding problems. Mr. Shaffer made a motion to actively pursue our application with FEMA for our road repairs as a

result of the flooding problems in the town, and hopefully we will be able to discuss it at the next Selectmen's meeting. He asked for a second. Mr. Bryer asked for a caveat that the work on the roads be limited to FEMA. Mr. Bryer stated he wants to stay with the five year plan and use the FEMA money to replace the money spent in the budget to repair the flooded roads. After discussion it was agreed not to make a motion until the board receives the FEMA decision.

Mr. Bailey asked if the Selectmen want the Highway Advisory Committee members to be present on Monday morning. Mr. Bryer stated he would like to have them present. Motion to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. by Mr. Witham, seconded by Mr. Shaffer.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion J. Knox

Secretary Highway Advisory Committee