

**Board of Selectmen
October 14, 2015**

Present: Kenneth S. Paul, Vice Chair; Connie Twombly; and Toni Bodah, Secretary.

Mr. Paul called the posted meeting to order at 7 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those present included John Blackwood; Dave Tibbetts; Jim Miller; Donna Martin (videographer); Ed Comeau (videographer); Bill Lambert, NH DOT; and Tom Beeler, *The Granite State News*. Joining the session in progress were James Bruno; and Mark Dobson.

1. Appointments

a) Bill Lambert, NH DOT – Mr. Lambert referred to the recent speed limit change on Route 153 (Province Lake Road). The State accomplished this project utilizing Federal funds targeted for safety improvements. He spoke to the history of joint efforts of Wakefield Police Chiefs and NH DOT to address speed limits in various areas of this town, and efforts in other towns as well. Several speed studies were conducted, and it was determined that 45 mph would be an appropriate speed limit. Prior to making that change, it was necessary to consider curve warning signs based on current standards. In an effort to be consistent, NH DOT chose to install any curve sign recommended by accumulated data. Mr. Paul noted that the number of warning signs installed is likely a nuisance to local drivers; however, they are probably helpful to others, especially during inclement/foggy weather. Mr. Paul asked whether members of the public had questions for Mr. Lambert.

Mr. Blackwood noted that Province Lake Road has been designated as a bicycle-friendly route and stressed that 45 mph is too fast. Mr. Blackwood also referred to the warning signs placed by the State in front of his house. He wants them removed, and he stated that the speed limit should not be more than 35 mph from the hay scales to North Conway.

Mr. Lambert stressed that the posted speed limit does not really affect the speed of traffic. He does not expect that people will drive faster; rather the posted speed limit is now closer to the speed of most drivers. Mr. Lambert stated that there could be a little leeway with respect to the exact location of the signs near Mr. Blackwood's home. Mr. Blackwood noted that if a car hits one of the signs, the gas tank could blow up. He stressed that 2 signs are located right in his yard. Mr. Lambert indicated that the purpose of the signs is to keep drivers on the road. Mr. Blackwood does not agree that will be the result. He again referred to bicyclists and the speed of vehicles.

Mr. Lambert stated there will be follow-up speed studies conducted; however, he firmly believes that 45 mph is a reasonable speed limit for that road. The warning signs were posted to alert drivers of the curves. Mr. Blackwood believes the project was a waste of taxpayers' money, and reiterated that the speed limit should not exceed 35 mph. He spoke to the condition of Route 153 and the maintenance (or lack thereof) done by the State. He added that the signs are not in keeping with the rural character of the town, and they will be in the way of snow plows. Mr. Lambert advised that he is not present to discuss the condition of Route 153, but he can pass those concerns along to the appropriate State department.

Mr. Miller asked whether there was any public involvement with the change in speed limit and/or the installation of signs. Mr. Lambert referred to a public meeting held previously with this Board and Chief Fifield, at which he made a presentation of the project. [September 10, 2014]

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Mr. Miller asked whether there had been any discussions with individual homeowners. Mr. Lambert stated that field supervisors did meet with several property owners. He stressed that they do try to work with the landowners as much as possible while still conforming to the standards established in the manual. Mr. Miller stated this is really about people, not a manual. He asked whether there is any process to apply to have a sign removed or replaced. Mr. Lambert encouraged those with such a request to contact his office (contact information available through the Town Hall or Police Department). He spoke to the need for consistency in installation of these signs.

Mr. Miller recalls the meeting to which Mr. Lambert referred, adding he read about speed limits discussed, but not about multiple signs. He would not be very happy to have such a sign in front of a window of his home. There should be some room for working with people. Mr. Lambert agreed and encouraged those to contact his office.

Mr. Blackwood again referred to this being a bicycle-friendly community and added that Route 153 is not safe at 45 mph. Mr. Lambert reiterated that the State will conduct follow-up speed studies. It is possible that the speed limit will be lowered, but he does not expect that to happen. He again stressed that raising the speed limit is not going to increase the speed of traffic. Mr. Beeler referred to that previous meeting and remembered that the Chief did not want to arrest the driver doing the average speed. He believed it was more fair to arrest those drivers going 50±.

Mr. Dobson is fine with the speed limit of 45 mph. However, he does have concerns with the notification process, or lack thereof. His wife came home one day to find State workers digging holes in his front yard to erect poles. Those workers stated there was no obligation to notify the homeowners of this work. Eversource was able to notify all homeowners, but a State agency could not do likewise. Mr. Lambert understands the concern expressed and referred to the State's learning curve in this matter. Certain areas of the state had no reaction to the signs, while other areas have expressed similar concerns as Wakefield. He added that the State does not have the data base of addresses that Eversource has. Mr. Dobson stressed that the information is available and the State could have made an effort. Mr. Lambert agreed there is room for improvement.

Mr. Dobson referred to the State's right-of-way and asked whether this is a case of eminent domain for the public good. Mr. Lambert indicated that the State does purchase property in some cases, but mostly they obtain easement rights that allow the State the right to maintain the roadway for a specific number of feet (from the center line). Mr. Dobson stressed that the property owner pays taxes and maintains his lawn, but the State has a right to erect signs on that lawn. He is concerned that the signs will reduce his property value. Mr. Dobson referred to his property being located on a gentle sweeping curve, adding it seems as though too many signs were installed. Mr. Lambert referred to a State technician driving the road and measuring each curve using a calibrated tool. He would be happy to bring the instrument to Wakefield and drive with the property owner. Mr. Dobson noted that the State could have saved itself some aggravation if it had met with or notified property owners first.

b) Linda Schier, AWWA – This appointment will be rescheduled.

2. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #1 – None forthcoming.

3. Unfinished Business

a) Town Seal – Mr. Miller presented his latest attempt, including a reduced version for letterhead. He suggested cutting out the seal and taping it to various Town vehicles to see how it looks at a distance. This rendition will be reviewed again by the full Board.

4. New Business

a) Bid for Cemetery Maintenance – Mr. Tibbetts advised that the Cemetery Trustees received only 1 bid for this work, from the same contractor as last year. Fred Elliott has bid \$31,000 per year (for a possible total of 3 years). **Mr. Paul moved to accept the bid of Fred Elliott for \$31,000 per year for cemetery maintenance, as recommended by the Cemetery Trustees. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

b) Bid for Town Property Maintenance – Mr. Paul advised that 3 bids were received as follows: Sumner Scape in Farmington - \$21,000/year; Howe Two in Wakefield - \$24,000/year; and Fred Elliott, Freedom - \$16,500/year. He stated that although Parks & Rec reviewed the 3 bids received, there had not been a quorum of members present. Mr. Paul suggested that the bids be returned to Parks & Rec for review by the full Commission. Ms. Twombly agreed.

5. Proposed Capital Reserve Fund Expenditures

a) Highway Construction \$56,963.97 – This represents purchase of the John Deere tractor and mower attachment. **Mr. Paul moved to approve this expenditure as presented. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

b) Highway Construction \$10,000 – This represents the cost of recent work on High Street done by FR Carroll. **Mr. Paul moved to approve this expenditure as presented. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

6. Correspondence

a) Larissa Mulkern Resignation – Ms. Mulkern has submitted her resignation as clerk for the Heritage Commission. She has done much for the Commission in the short time she spent with them, and she will be missed!

b) CASA – CASA has expressed gratitude for the 2015 appropriation.

c) ClearView Community TV – In accordance with its Policies & Procedures, ClearView is advising the Board of a recent complaint received, which they are handling.

7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #2 – Still none forthcoming!

8. Administrative Matters

a) Town Administrator's Update

--In November, the regularly scheduled meetings fall on Veterans' Day and the night before Thanksgiving. It was agreed that the Board would meet on November 18 instead, unless an issue arises making another meeting necessary.

b) Conservation Commission Membership Appointments – The Commission has recommended the appointment of Donna Martin as an alternate through March 2017. **Mr. Paul moved to appoint Donna Martin as an alternate member to the Conservation Commission for a term through March 2017. Ms. Twombley seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

c) Building Permit Releases – None forthcoming.

d) Payment Manifests – Ms. Twombley moved to approve Payroll #23 in the amount of \$66,059.76. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Ms. Twombley moved to approve AP #29 in the amount of \$814,435.41. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

e) Minutes – Mr. Paul moved to approve the minutes of September 23 & 30, and October 5 & 6, 2015, as presented. Ms. Twombley seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Miller mentioned that the Planning Board public hearing on the Dollar General project has been postponed until November 5.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

Richard C. Edwards, Chairperson

Kenneth S. Paul, Vice Chair

Connie Twombley