

Minutes of the Westmoreland Selectmen's Meeting

Thursday, September 1, 2022

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Russ Austin, Frank Reeder, John Snowdon

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm by Russ Austin
2. Approval of Minutes: August 18, 2022. Motion was made by Frank Reeder, seconded by John Snowdon to accept the minutes as printed. Motion passed 3-0
3. Accounts Payable: Motion was made by Frank Reeder, seconded by John Snowdon to Approve Manifests for: General Fund \$335,745.52 and Fire Station Fund \$10,462.60 Motion passed 3-0.
4. 1:08pm - Open Public Hearing per RSA 31:95-b, III (a) to accept and expend a \$30,870 ARPA SFRF Grant and \$3,430 match from the Fire Fighters Association for gear extractor and drying cabinet.
5. Old Business:
 - A. \$70,911.03 Highway Block Grant Received. Dave Poklemba, Road Agent - Paved McAdam Road this spring which cost \$88.50 per ton in place total \$92,297. Price now would be \$100 per. Originally planned to pave part of Glebe, but holding off because of cost. Would rather hold grant money for next spring when prices are predicted to be better. Selectmen agreed to wait for better pricing next year to use grant money in addition to next year's paving budget.
 - B. Frank Reeder - Last meeting a suggestion to line roads to keep people on their own side was made. Asked Poklemba to get pricing per mile to paint lines where roads meet State standards for width. How much additional cost to paint lines since the Town doesn't have equipment for painting roads?
 - C. Zoning and Planning Board Fees - John Snowdon - Planning Board meets Monday September 12th to work on fees. Reeder - If Planning differs from proposed Zoning Fees need to explain reasons. Once both boards have fees revised a hearing will be scheduled.
 - D. Daggett Hill - Reeder - Property deeded by the Town for non payment of taxes last year. Previous owner and son appear to be camping in a motorhome on the property and are parking in the road. When property was deeded a certified letter was sent to the previous owner that they could no longer be on the property and to contact the Town to remove belongings. Town Council advised since criminal trespassing is taking place the Town should call the State Police.
 - E. CCI - Snowdon - Selectmen addressed billing issues the town was having when CCI came to announce the new Fidium brand. Selectmen suggested that CCI honor lower pricing for the next year and let residents know when an increase will take place. At the Zoom meeting Snowdon attended on July 25th CCI announced that all six original towns would remain at original pricing for 1 year. CCI will be contacting residents to give them the opportunity to sign up for Fidium and receive the same rates they paid when they first signed up for broadband for 1 year. CCI also will join the Facebook page hosted by the Bridges to provide factual information for residents. They also plan to hold an event to allow residents to sign up

for Fidium. Reeder and Austin thanked Snowdon for his extensive efforts in making this happen for the Town. Jeanette Hubert - How long will residents receive the bond rate? Snowdon - The flat fee \$9.30 will remain the same the duration of the bond. See attachments for more information about Fidium.

- F. Community Power - Snowdon - PUC approved Community Power. The NH House and Senate have not yet met to vote. Mark Terry - First step is to form a local town committee. Reeder - Since purchasing power in bulk as a community saves money it makes sense to join either the county or coalition rather than reinvent the process ourselves with just our town.. Process would be similar to Broadband. Town would need to approve and residents could choose to participate or not. Austin - only affects cost not delivery. Snowdon and Terry will be meeting to discuss the County plan with Assistant County Administrator, Bouchard and compare it to the Monadnock Coalition. Terry agreed to be Town Representative if Town decides to join Keene, County or Monadnock Coalition. Snowdon - to be Selectboard representative on committee. Russ Austin - Is there more research to be done before forming a committee? Snowdon - Would like to put together a mission statement before forming a committee. Terry - With increasing electric cost would hopefully be ready to have a warrant article together for Town Meeting in March. If passed at Town Meeting residents could still opt out if they wanted to just like Broad Band.
- G. River Road Bridge Funding - Snowdon - Approximate cost \$2,000,000 to replace. There are currently 223 red listed bridges in NH. J. B. Mack finding the main option for funding is the State Bridge Aid Program. This program requires the Town to pay up front and reimburses 80%. Selectmen agree this would not work for the Town. State has determined the bridge has historic significance (See Attachment)
- a. Snowdon - Reached out to C.R. Welleke, Highway Bridge Engineer for NHDOT. 80/20 plan currently closed until 2026
 - b. 2025 beginning of new 10 year plan. If a bridge makes it on the list earliest considered 2027 due to backlog. NHDOT will be sending letters to 60-70 communities to get on the 2025-2034 10 year red list.
 - c. Cannot guarantee will be approved, but with length of time and bridge listed 4 (0-9 scale 9 highest) If/when bridge becomes a 3 state may say to either restrict to passenger cars only or to close.
 - d. December Town will receive \$107,000 from the State of New Hampshire Senate Bridge Bill. Welleke suggested that the Town put that towards engineering study and between now and 2034 piece together the rest of approximate \$300,000 engineering cost. Then use Federal money for construction. Town would have to front money.
 - e. Bridge important to residents who live near it, and county emergency services don't typically use it as they go from Partridge Brook to River Road unless flooded.
 - f. Reeder - Just ask the town for a fire station. Will not support another large ticket item to be put in front of the Town.
 - g. Jeanette Hubert - What has to be done differently if the bridge is historic? Snowdon - No clear answer. Whatever is done will be under scrutiny by historic and environmental entities. Likely to cost more.
 - h. Nancy Ranson - If the bridge gives out, who is liable? Reeder - If over weight the person driving the vehicle. If not, the State likely since they rate the bridges.

6. New Business:

- A. Motion was made by Russ Austin, seconded by Frank Reeder per RSA 31:19 to accept donations for the Westmoreland Veteran's Memorial Fund in the amount of \$200. Motion passed 3-0

B. Post Office Floor - Tile broken needs to be fixed. Reeder - Have Bruce Uhas look at it and determine if something he can fix or if Town will need to get prices from flooring company.

C. Recycling Center Toilet - Town owns the potty. It is cracked and needs to be replaced. Selectmen in agreement to price leasing one to replace.

Signature Approval was given for the following:

Payroll: 8/23/22, 8/31/22	General Journal Entries:	Retirement \$2497.42
Payroll Taxes:8/25/2022, 8/31/2022	813 Transfer BB to General	Healthtrust \$6455.38
Cemetery Deed	Argent Contrat	NHES \$25
Abatements Denied	Plodzik & Sanderson	Amazon \$228.21
Forest Fire Report	Representation Letter	

8. Correspondence - Hubert questioned why minutes are not available for the meeting August 24th. Reeder - Non-Public Meeting in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 H
9. Motion was made by Frank Reeder, seconded by John Snowdon to accept and expend unanticipated money per RSA 31:95-b to accept and expend a \$30,870 ARPA SFRF Grant and \$3,430 match from the Fire Fighters Association for gear extractor and drying cabinet. Motion passed 3-0
10. A motion was made by Frank Reeder, seconded by Russ Austin to enter into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3,II (c) at 2:35pm
11. A motion was made by Frank Reeder, seconded by John Snowdon, to seal the non-public session minutes and return to public session at 2:43

The meeting was adjourned at 2:44 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jodi Scanlan

Town Administrative Assistant

NEXT MEETING – THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 22, 2022 6:00pm
MINUTES ARE INITIALLY POSTED AS UNAPPROVED
SELECTMEN SIGNATURES DENOTE APPROVAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Russ Austin, Chairman

Frank Reeder

John Snowdon

River Road Bridge Historic Significance

“The Partridge Brook/County Farm Road Bridge was built in 1937 as the replacement for a covered bridge washed away by the Flood of March 1936. The state-funded project was part of a special appropriation to assist towns to replace bridges, part of the massive effort directed by the state highway department with various sources of federal and state funding. The composite timber and concrete slab bridge was designed by the talented state bridge engineer Robert J. Prowse, who was often called upon to take on projects that had innovative characteristics. The composite timber and concrete slab design had its origins in the experiments of J. F. Seiler, an engineer with the American Wood Preservers’ Association, a private industry group that was working to find new uses for wood structures, as they declined in importance due to competition from steel and concrete. Seiler had previously been Wyoming’s state bridge engineer. Seiler published his idea for the design in the November 1933 issue of Wood Preservation magazine. The first example of the design was in 1934 for the approach spans of a bascule bridge over Tampa Bay in Tampa, Florida. Over the next several years, a number of state highway departments tested the design, including Delaware and North Carolina, based on their historic bridge inventories. The composite wood and concrete technology illustrated the interest in adapting and combining materials to create economic bridge designs. This approach to searching out new composite materials characterized an important emerging mid-20th-century trend in bridge technology (e.g., glue-laminated wood beams, prestressed concrete beams, and composite concrete decks on steel girders), however, Seiler’s specific design did not prove to have much long-term potential, probably because its load-carrying capacity and costs in comparison with other bridge types. Prowse’s interpretation of the design was enhanced by his decision to camber the bridge over a deep ravine, making it visible from the curved approach roadways, and finishing it with custom-designed, Art Moderne-influenced balustrades drawing the eye to the cambered lines of the superstructure as it passed over the light timber bent piers. The bridge is eligible under Criterion A for its historic association with the flood relief bridge replacement program of 1936-37. It is also eligible under Criterion C as the state’s only extant example of a timber and concrete slab bridge that embodies the distinctive characteristics of this method of construction from the 1930s; it is also the work of a master engineer, Robert J. Prowse, based on a design developed by J. F. Seiler.”

<https://nh.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ebf189a3e44842d5a0b7669344adf925>