

ROXBURY SELECTBOARD MEETING
MINUTES OF APRIL 7, 2025
6:30PM – 9:30PM
COMMUNITY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Rene Bouchard, Vice-Chair Tim Martin, Donna French, Jeremy Reed and Nathan Donahue

STAFF PRESENT: Loren Bent (Road Foreman)

PUBLIC: Paul Schmidt, Dotti Guiffre, Sue Nevins, Carlos Montero, Heidi Albright, Deb Rogler, Tom Frazier and Walter French

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:30.
2. Tim Martin asked for the discussion of hiring personnel to be added to the Executive session.
3. No public comment was made at this time.
4. The minutes from March 17, March 20 and March 31 of 2025 as amended were moved by Jeremy and Tim seconded. To be approved. 5-0-0.
5. Road Commissioner's Report
 - A. Tim discussed the equipment: the loader is acting "funny" it appears that some sensors are malfunctioning, and the loader needs a new transmission, it will be covered by John Deere under the warranty; the trucking to get it to the shop will not be covered. The 2021 truck needs exhaust work done and will be covered under the warranty. The warranty ends on May 11th. The 2016 truck has brake issues and does not hold on a hill. The brake springs, shoes and drums could be worn out. Walter French who is DOT air brake certified offered to look at it.
 - B. Roads have fared well this spring with mud season. Andrew has been grading when possible. A culvert at the junction of Northfield Road and Warren Mountain Road has some sinking along the shoulder portion and Tim and Jeremy went to look at it. It may need to be dug up to ascertain what the problem is. It could be separated underground or undermined. Comments from the public were made as to when the road posting would be lifted. Loren said it is an all or nothing thing and typically roads like Tracy Hill are last to dry up.
 - C. A lengthy discussion took place concerning the upgrade of Raynor Rd., from Tillou Road approximately ¼ to the south ending at The Nevins and Montero property. There are four property owners along this portion of the road. Carlos Montero and Susan Nevins have been maintaining this road since living there and admit it is quite a task, especially snow blowing in the winter. They stated maybe the Carrolls on the road may move in the future to be permanent residents. It was taken up by the Board in 2022. Since then, quotes for the upgrade have been obtained by the owners. In late 2024 Carlos presented the Board with an idea to possibly have the town crew do the work, even if over multiple seasons/years and the property owners to pay for it. Upgrade of the road is a significant cost, to the tune of \$90,000 and may be even higher at current prices. The Board gravitated to not having the town crew do the work and entertained an upgrade with the homeowners/property owners bearing the

cost fully. A site visit in the future may be in order. Other comments were made by the Selectboard as having full discretion as to road upgrades or downgrades, also, the cost per mile to maintain all of our roads as compared to the amount we receive back from the state. Generally speaking, the cost per mile is certainly over \$15,000 and the revenue funding from the state is \$1,730.24 per mile. Heidi Albright said that she would assume the listed value of the real estate along the upgraded road should go up, but this is an open-ended question at this point. Jeremy and Nate commented that town crew simply have much to do and their main job is to maintain roads not to rebuild or build new ones. Jeremy also stated that some legal work may need to be done with easements, wetlands, etc. due to the widening of the road. Sue Nevins cited that roads such as Braintree Hill, Rabtoy Road and other roads have gone through upgrades and classification changes, and they are willing to pay for it. Tom Frazier stated that upgrading town roads at any expense is outrageous and although it has been done in the past with hand shake deals it just doesn't pay.

- D. Tim as the new Road Commissioner is going to resubmit a structures grant for a culvert on Warren Mountain Road for \$69,027.00 by the deadline of April 15.
- E. During a productive discussion between Tim and Loren in the previous days, Loren said that they really don't use the pagers and haven't for some time. The Board elected to cancel the contract for the pagers.
- F. The Board presented the annual Certificate of Compliance - codes and standards set forth by the State of Vermont for roads and bridges. Nathan made a motion to adopt those standards and Donna seconded it, it passed 5-0-0.
- G. The Board has adopted the Annual Financial Plan for Town Highways which sets the revenue rate per mile for each class of road. Class 1 \$12,660.24 for which we have no mileage. Class 2, \$4,654.44 which Warren Mountain Road is the only road and Class 3 \$1,730.24 which are most of our roads. Total revenue from the state is \$70,880.01. It also establishes the estimated total expense of maintaining these roads= \$993,723.00. \$686,726 generated from taxpayers and an additional \$306,997 for structures grants from the state for roads and bridges. Nathan made a motion and Tim seconded; it passed 5-0-0.

6. Financial Report

- A. Some discussion about the price of motor oil from Schaffer Oil. Tim stated that he has looked into finding an oil of the same quality/spec for less. The orders were approved with Jeremy making the motion and Donna seconded 5-0-0.

7. Unfinished Business

- A. RVS update- Jim Murphy has stepped down as chair and Mia Moore is the new Chair. The Board has sent a letter with the intent to receive ownership of the school as per the merger agreement with contingencies. The School Board has asked for our lawyer's information to start the negotiation process.
- B. Fire Station Bollards for protection of the new electrical service entrance was discussed and the board might have found a cheaper option than buying steel. Tim is going to look into the codes and standards for what diameter and construction needs to be done for adequate protection.

8. New Business

- A. The Roxbury Community Trust thought it needed a letter of recommendation from the Selectboard to help in getting the Paul Broom Grant totaling \$100,000 for structural repair of the Old Church. Tom Frazier and Heidi Albright filled the Board and the public in on the state of the building, importance of it historically, and visually to the town and hope in the future the Selectboard can lend a helping hand, if necessary, in obtaining future grants.
- B. At last fall's ROCOR clean up at the Third Branch Park, the brush pile still needs to be moved. Tim stated that the road crew shouldn't be spending valuable time and money chipping the brush. Burning was discussed as an option but the Board thought it might invite others to have fires in the park if a burn spot was sighted. The resolution was to have a potential volunteer move the pile with a tractor to an inconspicuous spot once it dries up.
- C. Rene spoke about the Local Option Tax. The State has simplified the process of applying for the program though they may have a limit for how many towns can apply. There are 3 types of tax: Sales, Meals and Rooms. The amount of the tax added is 1%. The reasons why Towns adopt the tax was mentioned. The sales and meals tax are more on our citizens and purchases made online would be charged the tax. Rooms tax would be paid by nonresidents for short-term rentals. A 1% rooms tax is what is being contemplated for Roxbury. Rene mentioned that he had learned that from September 2022 to September 2023, 29 properties generated \$269,818 which would have given about \$1,900 to the Town (if the Town's had adopted the tax). This is a revenue stream paid by nonresidents and once set up with department of taxes we would get quarterly revenue. Process would be: Board approves, Town votes, if approved, submit to department of taxes and a few months later, revenue could come in. Deb Rogler spoke to Board about Bed & Breakfasts. The Board discussed what funds could be used on. Jeremy suggested putting into the general fund. Rene mentioned putting into a reserve fund. Rene will contact the tax department to find out if they are still letting Towns into the program. Donna suggested Rene get clarity on Bed & Breakfast status with option tax.
- D. Green-Up Day is coming up, May 3rd to be exact; and the Board discussed what information needs to be decided for Claire to put on the poster. It was elected to have a dumpster in Roxbury with Tim checking into the size and cost of another dumpster from Eric Davis to be put in East Roxbury. Tim proposed to do the tires this year at a cost of \$4 per tire and The Neighbors helping Neighbor Group would subsidize \$1 per tire for first 8 tires, yielding a net cost to the resident for \$3 a tire with a limit of 8 tires per household. There would also be additional ways of getting rid of metal for free and, of course, the church would be doing a lunch. Typical parameters apply, no electronics, refrigerators, mattresses or hazardous waste will be accepted.
- E. Nate will be looking into a grant for planting of trees on town property through a grant from VT Urban and Community Forestry Program. The max Grant is up to \$2,000.00 from 1-10 trees and guidance will be facilitated by Vt Urban and VT Dept of Transportation. Any planting in the State ROW would need additional permits. Additionally, a speed calming feature may be pursued and installed as cited in the past sidewalk study as you enter town to give the driver a cue to slow down. All plantings, species, number and placement are to be determined and the grant is biannual with April and September deadlines. Jeremy moved, with Donna seconded to have Nate pursue the grant. 5-0-0.

9. No other business was taken up except prior to leaving Heidi Albright mentioned the Library Coffee Hour at 9:30 am this Saturday, April 12th.
10. Executive Session. Nate moved to go into executive session to discuss personnel. Donna seconded. 5-0-0. The Board entered executive session at 9:00 p.m. The Selectboard came out of executive session at 9:30 p.m. The Board elected to investigate hiring a part-time employee to assist with vehicle and equipment maintenance.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Nate Donahue, Acting Clerk
Approved on April 21, 2025