

Town of Hartford

Road Committee Meeting

17 October 2024

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm. Members present were: Wesley Brown, Al Borzelli, David Theriault, Steve Elsmann, and Dianne DiBlasio and Paul Burmeister. Also in attendance were Kathleen Landry and Ken Violette.

Chairperson Al Borzelli started the meeting and asked Dave Theriault to read the minutes from the 9 September 2024 Road Committee meeting. The minutes were voted on and approved.

Chairmen Borzelli declared “that when anybody is out and about, if we get any complaints, if they look at them, then the next meeting we can bring them together. It seems like years ago, we would go out with a great big group and try to do this, but right now, everybody’s busy. I mean I’m busy, you’re busy, he’s busy... If you look at roads, ... bring it back and we’ll discuss it. We have to go back and look at it again. We’re not getting too many complaints right now, and some of the things we do have complaints on, I don’t really think we could (complete), unless they have a serious complaint then we’re not going to get them done this year. We’re running out of time. Even Dakin Lane, with that sand problem, as soon as we get a rainstorm, and it freezes – that problem is over until next Spring”. Diane stated “I think Spring is going to be a problem, so I don’t know. I know he’s grading the 1<sup>st</sup> of November. I’m assuming he’s bringing in gravel in to do some roads”. Al injected “I’ll look at Dakin Lane, what these guys suggested (pointing towards Paul and Diane) he (Paul) definitely suggested go up there (Dakin Lane) and see how deep the sand is”. Dave remarked “deep”. Diane again states “It’s a terrible road, it needs gravel”. Al remarked “He (Paul) suggested taking some of the sand out of there, then put fabric paper down.” Dave injected “That was my thought (remove the sand), I agree with that”. Al continued “So we can write that up and give it to the SelectBoard people and then it’s up to them to get it done... so that’s right in the turnaround is where you’re thinking?”. (speaking directly at Diane) Diane responds “...It’s the sides of the road, it’s very soft. I don’t know if it’s when we had all that rain and it washed down”. Al states “That’s a pretty long road though, I don’t know, before the cull de sac if you want to put all that fabric paper all that...” Diane says “No”. Al continues, “If you’re talking about gravel, that’s a serious amount of gravel.” Paul states, “Until I get up there, and take a more...” Al states, “All right, we won’t...” Paul states that “I can’t honestly speak towards what it (Dakin) needs right now.” Al returns, “if anyone wants to take a ride, (speaking to Dave directly) you already looked at it”. Dave responds “Yeah, in fact I had a complaint, not an official complaint, but last Spring I was the only one on the Road Committee, and I went up there (Dakin) and that was Mr. Powers on the top left (Home) that’s what he said – Don’t go near the sides because you’re going to sink right in. And then recently we just had the latest complaint for up there (Dakin), so I went up there. I don’t know who owns the top right trailer as you are heading up the hill but just after him, before the cull de sac turnaround, there was quite a hole right in the lane as you’re going up, and it wasn’t even that close to the edge either, so I don’t know if that got smoothed over or what.” Diane again states “I think the biggest problem with that road is that turnaround up top. There is no ditching. So, I think that when we got all that rain, all the stuff just got washed down.”

Steve responds "Another subdivision ... (indiscernible)" Al responds "I don't know, if BIM goes up there and grades that can he pull some of that from the middle of the road?" A little more conversation ensued about Dakin Lane and finally Paul said that he would go up and look at it this weekend.

The subject matter of grading came up from Wesley, and Borzelli stated that "Di's got the grader rented." Diane spoke up and said "McNeil Farms rented it from the 4<sup>th</sup> of November to the 11<sup>th</sup>. Selectmember Landry stated "...the Town of Hartford is paying for the grader, I would assume." Diane responds "I'm guessing it's getting billed to McNeil Farms, and then yes - ... it's getting reserved in McNeil Farms. McNeil Farms is signing the contract". Landry further inquired about the transaction "so McNeil Farms will bill the town of Hartford?" Diane replies "I assume so...that would be correct."

Al asked Kathleen Landry if the Selectboard was all set with Mahoney road ? Kathleen said yes.

Al then stated that "the Selectboard was given a list of the culverts that need to be cleaned."

Dave asked "is there any more cold patch in inventory?" Diane responded that "there is nothing". Kathleen Landry stated "BIM has said financially that whatever needs to be done can wait until next year. I have a question, we are trying to be financially mindful and someone had mentioned that the State could be contacted to see if the State could assume the plowing on rte. 219 and 140. Is that possible?" Al responds "they are state roads. I don't know when or how they (McNeil Farms) ended up taking on these roads. Buckfield does rte. 140." Paul stated "I know they (State) does 219 in Turner. West Paris, Sumner and Hartford all do rte. 219 all the way to rte. 26 (Trap Corner). I don't know how you find out maybe they charge the Town to pay plowing." Diane says "They used to, when Hartford would plow we would get a certain amount of money back. But they don't do that anymore." Wesley stated "they stopped doing that 20 years ago." Diane replies "I don't know how it's determined what's..." Wesley replies "I already checked." Diane continues "I don't know how it's determined if Town or State plows the main groups." Wesley said "The State does that, we don't get to say we don't." Al states "We could probably bring it up to the Budget (committee), Right ?" Looking towards Ken Violette. Ken states "I think it is a good question; I don't know if the Budget could answer it. I would think that it must be the amount of travel on the road. How the State meters the road. They do rte. 219 on the east side of rte. 4, so that side must have enough traffic for the State to justify to do it. Maybe this side of rte. 219 hasn't since they last did a study. We can ask them (State) to possibly do another study, at least on 219 from rte. 4 this way." Al stated "do you want to do this prior to the next budget meeting?" Ken replied "that would help adjust the miles of road that would come off the next plowing contract. It won't help this winter, but it would help with the bid package that would go out in the Spring". Al responded that we need to do everything we can to keep taxes in this town down. Ken states "find out the curriculum they use to determine..." Al talks to Wesley and then Al states "Wesley will check into it for us". Wesley comments " I have a question that we need to consider. I hear you talking about this road needs gravel put on to it. Do we have a standard with asking for the quality of gravel going on (all roads)?". Al replies "We should not, we should get ... I didn't realize that pit was as close as it is, versus going to Pidacks. We should have good gravel. The stuff we've been getting for years out of local pits... Paul states "Well, it's not just good gravel, but it's getting it right. Everything makes a difference. Wesley injects "The stuff they been using is full of (vines)??? That's why we're getting all of that crap in the ditches." Al speaks up

and says “another thing is when they run it (gravel) through a screen in a crusher, it only crushes big rocks and everything else wrong rolls through the screen. But Pidacks is giving you a size and it’s maintained that size throughout the whole load.” Wesley states “... crushed would be good for overlay.” Paul injects “so that’s more of a top cover of six inches”. Wesley returns “asking for crushed gravel, you won’t end up with junk gravel because they won’t bother to crush crap”. Al responds “If it’s a bad road we need bigger... one inch... like if we’re going to do the road up”. Paul states “You end up using a type “D” which is your base of the road. You’re supposed to use 3 inch minus. So (to start) it’s everything three-inch minus. A typical road is 18 inches of 3 inch-minus or type “D”, and then on top of that you put 6 inches of type “A”, on top of that ¾ inch-minus or a half inch-minus.” Dave injected “ You get finer as you go up”. Paul returned yes, “it packs down flatter and holds a little better. But doing that (detail), you need to get pavement on top of it because over time it’s just going to splash out... any place that gets water spots and people drive over them it splashes out, and will continue to happen (over time) until you get something on top of it (pavement).” Wesley states “I’ve seen a lot of this so-called gravel, and it’s just “bank run” crap. Paul replied “that’s my concern, I don’t know what he (BIM) uses. I’ve never watched him. “Bank run” is really easy to get free right down the road.” Wesley replies “nobody wants to stand and watch “bank run”, so you’re going to have to set a standard where they can’t just go and get “bank run”. Al injects “Harley Swanson, for years when I was on the road committee, .... Wanted to have different ratings because he worked for Blue Rock.” Al continued discussion about the frustration upon this very issue that was ignored by previous selectboard majorities over the recommendations concerning road sub pavement. Paul spoke up and said “roads are going to last longer if you do them right. Just laying gravel down and grading them off doesn’t work either. You’ve got to pack it down; you’ve got to roll it, and make sure it’s right (after packing). There is a spec to it as far as “compaction testing”. 95% of testing is what you are supposed to hit. There are actually people that test to make sure they hit that mark. Because then, everything - to how much water is in the sand at the time they packed it, and then then how much they compact it. So if it’s overly wet, it won’t compact as it should (when dryer).” Al replies “a lot of this “bank run” gravel we’ve been getting when you put it under the road that asphalt just squats. It (bank run gravel) just keeps pushing out. And then it (asphalt) all breaks up. There is a few roads in the town that have been done right. Stetson road is good...” Paul continues “If you’re going to do a decent size road; a scope of the work should be distance, width, and thickness of gravel you want. Then you’re going to specify what types of gravel you’re supposed to use. Next you have to have somebody, our road commissioner - is supposed to verify that is being done right.” Al replies “He (BIM) is supposed to oversee the work, not us (road committee). The other thing is, if you have a road that doesn’t have a super lot of houses on it, then how do you justify doing a road like that and paying for it without tax money from that road. Go on Camp road, that things like a highway. That was a lot (of money) to put into that road.” Some of the major roads that people use all the time which are “go-through” roads – when I did the road traffic meters (previous years) – Town Farm should have been done five years ago. So you have to be careful about what roads are getting done and not getting done. “Go-through” roads are your most important roads. Any dead end roads, nobody should going down that dead end except people living there.” Discussion continued about plow truck turn arounds, the Riley residence at the top of Darrington is needed. Paul stated he could go up to the top of Darrington this weekend and figure out what we need to propose, after Al stated we could specify a

bid package for the selectboard. After more discussion Dakin Lane was scheduled for whoever in the group wanted to meet there at 08:00 on Saturday.

Diane started talking about culverts not being maintained, She suggested contacting Canton Fire department, if we donate some money maybe they can blast our culverts clean. Diane agreed to ask Canton, and Al stated we could go out and mark the culverts that needed to be cleared. Discussion changed to categorizing road complaints, whether they are still open, completed, or need further investigation. Dave stated that Mr. Tardiff on Town Farm submitted another recent road complaint that was a continuation of previous submitted complaints by him on apparently unresolved issues. Dave agreed to knock on Mr. Tardiff's door for clarification on the specific issues in the complaints.

Selectboard Landry stated that the road software is on this laptop (being used for YouTube presently). The town is looking into purchasing a new laptop from the last grant, which will free that present laptop up. We will wipe all of the data off this old laptop so that it will be dedicated strictly to road software and entering road data, conditions of the roads, and all of the specifics the software is capable of. When the new laptop arrives, the plan is to clear the old laptop of everything but Road documentation and software moving forward. Presently the response of the old laptop is extremely slow and difficult to use efficiently. The RSMS Program is a good product to keep track of the road details, Diane has used the software program in previous years and it will facilitate width, mileage, location including GPS coordinates. Kathleen Landry requested that road work invoices should also be categorized to specific roads to update the status and expenditures of each road. The invoices from this current year can be entered into the database as a starting point. Dave suggested that there are a number of mapping programs that we could purchase, similar to OnXhunt, that would give a lot of information including landowners names and property borders at your fingertips. The discussion switched to culverts and possibly developing a proactive program to replace a few old steel culverts each year, as there are several in use around town. Diane returned the discussion to the laptop data that used to be in the database from years past. Diane presented a hardcopy of individual roads that listed culverts – width and length, GPS coordinates.

Paul requested a written agenda perhaps a week before road committee meetings to give everyone time to survey the targeted road conditions before the next meeting and therefore attend the meeting with some solid input for discussion. Al stated that maybe we each could individually pick a road and access the condition. Gurney Hill was mentioned by Diane, specifically a recent logging road opening that didn't have a culvert and Dave stated that he would look at it.

Dave stated that the Selectboard just handed us the road standards fourth edition. The document should probably be scrutinized and revised to present committee recommendations. Diane stated it can be revised but it will have to go to a town meeting. Dave stated that we will go through proper channels, perhaps the ordinance committee if changes are desired. Paul suggested - scan the road standards in, and email it to everyone for future discussion. Dave agreed to do this.

Al asked Dave if he could incorporate the hand written notes that Paul had composed during this meeting into the minutes of the meeting. Discussion ensued about the old 140 narrow bridge that is a possibility for obtaining a state grant for replacement. Dave stated that we can submit that into the newly created Municipal Stream Crossing program of FEMA for next year 2025. The town match

is only \$5,000.00 if the State agrees to upgrade that bridge, and Hartford has until July 1<sup>st</sup> to submit that application request for 2025.

Next Paul's notes were requested by Al to be used as an agenda for the next meeting. Then the topic changed to having a one year road plan, a two year plan and a five year plan. Regarding the road commissioner, it was suggested that his input should definitely be part of our planning at our road committee meetings. The budget committee time frame for March was discussed to have 2025 road repair requests for them to vote on allocating funds on summer road maintenance. Ken Violette stated that the road committee could come up with a scope of work including cost estimates and submit that request to the Selectboard.

The next Road Committee meeting was scheduled for Thursday the 24<sup>th</sup> of October at 18:00.

In recapping, Al stated that he wanted to be on record as taking a look at the current status of Church Street.

Wesley would be checking with the State of Maine about possibly getting the State to plow routes 219 and 140 through Hartford.

Diane is checking with Canton Fire Department culvert cleanings.

Meeting was adjourned at 20:06...