

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE TOWN OF SUFFIELD
PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
November 16, 2010**

Commission Members Present: Chairman Guy Boccasile, Tony Roncaioli, Ron Rookey, Al Pastula and George Rodgers. Absent: Steven Stoll. Also present was Landfill Superintendent Robert Heintz and Public Works Director, Jack Muska. Chairman Boccasile called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall lower level conference room on Tuesday, November 16, 2010. At the time of the Call of the Meeting at 7 p.m., a quorum was not present. Mr. Roncaioli and Rodgers came into the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: October 19, 2010 were tabled due to a lack of quorum.

Nominations of Officers for 2011. A motion to table nominations until all members of the Commission are present. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Meeting Calendar: The meeting calendar for 2011 was approved. The Commission will continue to meet on the third Tuesday of every month with the exception of July and August.

Public Works Director's Report:

Jack Muska explained that Mark Cervione has applied for a State grant for the cash for clunkers program. The State is trying to get municipalities to replace old gas powered equipment under 25 hp. The State will pay up to 80% of the cost of new mowers and hand tools which are more energy efficient.

Large Animal Facility: The proposal has been approved by Conservation and Zoning Commission to go ahead with the design. The next step is to go to PBC and Board of Education and then on January 11th to the State where they review the plans and give the go ahead to go out to Bid. We can probably expect to go out to Bid in late February or early March to begin construction in April 2011 and complete the job in June 2012.

Library Renovations: A set of Bids were open today for a cost estimate for the ADA portion of the building. The architects were given three options to meet the ADA requirements. Two options would require an addition to the building which would knock down the ramp and putting in an addition and an elevator on the back side of the building. The second option is on the south side of the building putting in a new parking lot which would cut into the Veteran's Monument area.

Overhill Drive Project: About 90% of the curbing is in and the base pavement is down. Also 60% of the final paving is done. The entire project should be done in the next week or two.

Bonding Package: The Board of Selectmen is trying to pass a Bonding Package for anywhere from \$10 to \$15 million dollars. There is a public forum on November 30th at the High School at 7 p.m. They will be looking for funding for five separate projects: Road repair; fire trucks; town hall renovations; Bridge Street school renovation and Library refurbishing.

White's Pond Dam: The Town Engineer is working on estimates for the design and repair of the valves to control the water flow. The Pavilion at Sunrise Park had all new windows and doors put in which was part of an Eagle Scout Project.

Jack met with Bob Heintz and Bill Hawkins up at the Landfill to review the plans for the installation of the new power lines with representatives from CL&P. The proposal is for 3 new towers at the landfill which will begin around 2012. Agreements for temporary space area and an access road are being reviewed by the Town Attorney.

Other Discussion:

Mr. Roncaioli asked about the workload and projects of the Highway Department. He wanted to know what is being accomplished and what big projects the Department is working on. Mr. Muska said the big projects are always trees, which the department responds to immediately. Mowing and leaves are other big project during the summer and fall and also field maintenance. There are 2 men assigned to mowing and 2 on field maintenance. There is 1 mechanic who works on all the vehicles and 1 man who drives the tri-axle truck who goes to CRRA with the Town's MSW. Mr. Roncaioli felt these tasks are not "highway" work and wondered why we are paying highway wages of \$25-\$30/hr to do \$9 or \$10/hour landscaper work. He felt this issue is something the Public Works Commission should have some control over. The Town is not utilizing Highway Department employees for what they are being paid for. Mr. Muska told him that highway employees also do drainage work, catch basin projects and repair pot holes. He said the department is a small group with limited equipment that cannot handle big road or construction projects. Mr. Muska said Union Contracts are in place, and we cannot change things immediately. Mr. Muska said we pay summer help \$10/hour to do mowing. Mr. Roncaioli said as a Commission, we need to look at these issues and figure out how to fix it. Mr. Muska said we can only fix this over time with retirements, and through Union negotiations. Unfortunately we have not had any retirements, and currently negotiating a new Contract. Mr. Roncaioli said then we need to change the perimeters of what the Highway Dept. is doing. If we are not operating as a highway crew any longer, then we should replace these workers with a Parks & Recreation grounds crew. Mr. Muska said the Commission should make that recommendation to the Board of Selectmen, and left the meeting at this point.

Mr. Roncaioli said for years the Highway Department has been doing menial work, but paying personnel highway men wages. Mr. Rookey pointed out that the Highway Department is also called out for private organizations projects, such as Relay For Life, Suffield On The Green, etc., and therefore they cannot do their normal jobs because they are doing all this "free work" for other groups in town. Mr. Boccasile said this process started years ago when the First Selectman calls the Highway Dept to address whatever

jobs they want done on any given day. Then what was originally on their agenda for work that day, is disrupted because they are sent off to do other jobs that the First Selectman wants them to do first. Mr. Roncaioli asked how do we get the Highway Department back to doing highway work? He feels the Commission needs to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen who in turn needs to decide what the Highway Department should be doing. Is the Department a recreation department or a highway department? Mr. Roncaioli then requested a daily log of what the Department does and a list of the projects they worked on this past summer.

Discussion continued regarding the “time clock” and why the Department is not using it. Mr. Roncaioli wanted to know who made the decision not to use the time clock. Mr. Boccasile suggested someone go down to the Highway Department and just ask Mark these types of questions. Mr. Rookey said he would volunteer to compile some information and speak with Mark Cervione and report back to the Commission next month.

Landfill Superintendent’s Report:

Mr. Heintz said he tried to burn at the landfill on November 1st, but was told by the Fire Department to put it out due to complaints from the Bradley Field Tower.

Mr. Heintz had to complete a survey for a consulting firm compiling information from Towns who are is working with CCSWA at an alternative to CRRA. In 2012, the Town’s contract is up with CRRA.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Koren, Recording Secretary