

NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
Minutes of the Work Session of August 21, 2012

Present: Sel. Bluhm, Sel. Ziminsky

Also Present: Bob Southworth, Members of the CIP Committee

The work session was called to order a 6:30pm.

1. Highway and Sanitation Department

Highway Superintendent Bob Southworth summarized that moving ahead would fill two needs in the department: providing an additional driver for peak work periods and providing in-house mechanical services for emergency and non-emergency repairs. There are currently three alternatives:

- a. Leave the position vacant, contract out all but routine mechanical services and hire seasonal workers to handle peak work loads.
- b. Hire a driver with limited mechanical skills who could perform simple repairs and vehicle maintenance in house and could also drive as needed.
- c. Hire a mechanic with the skills and background to perform all but the most specialized repairs in-house and who would also be able to drive as needed.

Board members reviewed the three options, discussing the relative cost of each, the need for an additional crew member in summer and winter months, the need for an in-house mechanic, the types of repairs that could be accomplished in house under all three options and the effect of staffing levels on Bob's ability to focus on managing the department. Bob recommends moving ahead with the second option, saying that it would be the most cost effective in terms of support of the existing work crew and being able to keep the fleet in good working order.

2. Joint meeting with CIP Committee

CIP Committee Chair Ed Weingartner noted that the comprehensive review of town road maintenance needs conducted by the committee shows the need for approximately \$4 million in repairs over the next 10 years. Committee members discussed several topics, including the differences between road reconstruction and road repair projects and which should be funded through the CIP process instead of through the operating budget.

Dennis Allen recommended that shim and overlay work and reconstructions be included in the CIP, ditching work not associated with road reconstruction should be in the operating budget. Committee members and Board members concurred. Members then discussed whether CIP projects should be placed as separate warrant articles at town meeting. Sel Bluhm expressed concern that he believes that Selectmen should not have the authority to expend capital reserve

funds. Committee members and Board members discussed at length how monies could be transferred into capital reserve funds and restrictions that would be placed on monies removed from such funds. Board members stated that they approved the concept of establishing capital reserve funds as a means of providing greater surety that monies would be available for road projects, that monies in a CRF would roll over for future capital projects and that there should be some flexibility in the management of these funds to account for projects that come in over budget, etc.

Committee members questioned whether Highway Block Grant monies can be transferred to a CRF and rolled over from year to year. It was agreed that Glenn would look into this.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm

APPROVED BY THE NORTHFIELD SELECTBOARD ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2012