

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
December 29, 2009
Center School Offices
7:00 p.m.**

Select Board Chair Jonathan Edwards called the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Whately to order on Tuesday, December 29, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. Also present were Selectman Paul Newlin, Town Administrator/Town Clerk Lynn Sibley, and Municipal Secretary Barbara Hancock. Selectman Joyce Palmer Fortune was absent. Minutes from the Dec 15th meeting were accepted as written. The vendor and payroll warrants were reviewed and signed.

Town Administrator, Lynn Sibley: Yankee Candle Gifts – Yankee Candle presented the Fire Dept. with a donation to purchase Confined Space Equipment at their annual gifts ceremony recently. **Cultural Council** – Ramsay Klaff will resign effective January 15th. Ramsay currently serves as the Council’s chair. Neal Abraham, the Council’s newest member, has agreed to assume the position of Chair. Upon Ramsay’s resignation, there will be two vacancies on the Council. **Post Office** – Gertrude Bardwell named the Historical Society in her will, to receive ownership of the building currently leased by the Postal Service as the Whately Post Office. They have requested the building be added to the Town’s property insurance as an ‘additionally insured’ facility. However, the Town insurance company, MIAA, advised against it and further recommended that the Town obtain a certificate of insurance from the Historical Society annually. The Selectmen considered the coverage and the liability the Town may face and voted against adding the building to the Town’s policy. They agreed that proof of insurance for the building from the Historical Society and US Postal Service should be kept on file. **Campaign Finance Reports** – The Selectmen signed and submitted their campaign finance reports.

Town Clerk, Lynn Sibley: Absentee Ballots are available. Voter registration sessions will be held Wednesday December 30th from 2-4 and 7-8pm.

Highway Dept: Lynn update the Board. **Haydenville Rd Bridge** project was advertised and bids are due Feb. 9th. **Hatfield Grader** – Lynn emailed comments regarding a proposed shared grader agreement to Marlene Michonski, Hatfield’s Town Administrator. No response to date. **STRAP** – still working on the grant. **Williamsburg Road Grant** – no update.

Haydenville Road through Williamsburg – Highway Superintendent Keith Bardwell was on hand to discuss the proposed project. The project was briefly discussed at the last Board meeting. Keith explained that the construction would cover 6 miles of Haydenville Rd from Chestnut Plain Road in Whately into Williamsburg to Rt. 9. Planned drainage improvements would drain storm water runoff into a closed drainage system, keeping it from washing into Northampton’s reservoir.

Keith highlighted some points to consider (summary sheet provided):

1. The 3.3 miles (17,424 feet) of Haydenville Rd that lay within Whately would cost the Town \$440,000 (at today’s prices) to repave. So far this fiscal year, over \$5000 has been spent in labor and blacktop just to do patch work. Over the next fifteen years, the entire stretch will need to be repaved, probably in sections a little at a time.
2. The highway department planned to repave and improve drainage on a portion of Haydenville Rd this spring with C90 funds (estimated \$120,000). Keith is in the process of obtaining quotes for a NOI. The NOI would be included in the engineering costs if the Williamsburg co-project were planned.
3. The TIP program that would fund this project would bring all work up to the highest safety standards, replacing cement post guardrails with galvanized rails (+/- \$71,588). Such an upgrade would not be possible if Whately funded the road’s repaving with C90 funds piecemeal.
4. The TIP program may also allow for some road redesign in the Stippe Rd/Webber Rd area to create a 90° intersection. The State strives to bring intersections in at right angles.

5. The TIP program would fund all expenses except the initial design work, estimated to cost \$600,000. The design costs could be split between Whately, Williamsburg and possibly Northampton. Northampton has a vested interest in this project as it would protect their reservoir. Northampton may be able to offer their engineering department to help with the design work.
6. If this project were accepted under the TIP program, all of Whately's C90 funds could be focused on other areas of Town.
7. Whately's portion of the design work would need to be funded through a debt exclusion or three years worth of Chapter 90 funds exclusively (receive approximately \$120,000/yr).
8. Originally Keith had discussed a smaller project, Adams Rd to Webber Rd, with Northampton using their engineering dept to do the design work. That stretch of road would involve the largest amount of design work because of the drainage involved. If the six-mile project is unsuccessful, perhaps Whately can negotiate this smaller project.

Keith has been working on obtaining a NOI for the work he planned to complete on Haydenville Rd in the spring. He has been working with Chuck Dauchy to delineate the areas that need a NOI to minimize the costs, down to \$10-15,000 from \$40,000. But this proposed TIP program would include this same area of road. The Selectmen considered whether Keith should continue to pursue the spring project on Haydenville Rd. Keith could spend \$31,000 to chip seal and level the area that would serve adequate for the next 5 years until the TIP program were complete. There would be no drainage repair done. Otherwise, Keith is planning to spend approximately \$120,000 in the spring to completely repair that area including drainage. Lynn will contact Northampton and Williamsburg to determine their interest and commitment level to the full-scale project through the TIP program or a scaled down version involving the stretch of roadway between Adams Rd and Webber Rd. Keith should continue investigating the NOI quotes without investing any money at this point.

Ruth Fairman Letter – Tree: Keith had looked at the tree Mrs. Fairman referred to in her letter last year and had spoken with her at the time. The tree is healthy. It does shed leaves and small twigs but there is no justifiable reason to cut the tree down. The Selectmen agreed. **Street Light:** The Town had voted at town meeting to discontinue town-funded street lighting. Mrs. Fairman can contact the electric company to turn a street light on near her home, but she would be responsible for the costs. If there were a few neighbors that were interested in turning on a streetlight, perhaps they could share the monthly bill. **Water:** According to Lynn, Bill Smith has checked out the area. All water tests are up-to-date. Lynn will write to the Water Commissioners for their response to Mrs. Fairman's concerns.

Westbrook Road Speed Limits – Received speed recommendations from Mass Highway for Westbrook Rd. The Board reviewed and approved the recommendations. Report signed. Once processed with the state, speed limit signs will be installed designating the 25 and 35 mph areas.

New Business

ABCC Year-end Report – The Selectmen reviewed and signed the final licensing paperwork for the ABCC.

There being no further business to come before this meeting, it was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Paul Newlin, Acting Clerk