

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 1, 2009 and RECONVENED DECEMBER 2, 2009**

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Brown, Rymph, Shay, Banks, Lindsay, Suprenant, Hurley, Campbell

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Scribner

SUPERVISORS: Wilbur, LaPointe, G. Hall

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Kyle Vandewater, Deputy Supt. DPW

Kevin Hayes, County Administrator

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Nick Reisman, Post Star

Phyllis Cooper, Treasurer

Erika Sellar-Ryan, Assistant County Atty.

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN NOTICE:

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes – November 4, 2009
3. Department Requests/Reports:
 - a. Sewer District
 - i. Irving Tissue Sewer Line Repairs
 - ii. Havens Claim - \$961.80
 - iii. River Street Sewer Line Repairs
 - iv. LTCP Progress
 - b. Public Works
 - i. Warren County Snow/Ice Contract
 - ii. NYSDOT Snow/Ice Contract
 1. Presentation of Detailed Financial Analysis by DPW
 2. Consideration of Contract
 - iii. Staffing Issues
 - iv. Progress on Snow Plow Routing Efficiency Study
4. Recycling Advisory Board Report
5. Other Business
6. Department Head Evaluation – Superintendent of Public Works
7. Adjournment

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

A motion to accept the minutes of the November 4, 2009 meeting was moved by Mr. Lindsay, seconded and adopted.

SEWER DISTRICT – Joe Brilling, Executive Director Sewer District No. 2, addressed the following items with the committee:

Irving Tissue Sewer Line Repairs – He stated there is a line running through the Irving Tissue property that has been a problem for twenty years. A series of quick fixes have occurred over that period of time. He went out and checked it out and found a cracked open pipe at grade in a high traffic location that needs to be replaced. With his background in DEC, this problem needs to be fixed. He is getting prices to fix this problem that needs to be done before winter. The other issue is the overflows that typically occur at this site. He plans to quickly fix once he has some figures. A motion to approve expenditure of funds for Irving Tissue sewer line repairs pending approval of the Sewer Board was moved by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Suprenant and adopted.

Havens Claim – The claimant is requesting reimbursement for expenses incurred, All Pro Cleaning Service, from a clean up due to a sewer main backup. Originally when the Sewer District investigated, they felt cracks in the foundation were the contributing factor. The Sewer District had been in that area working earlier in the week. Joe stated resolution of this matter has been ongoing since summer and if approved to pay then he recommends a disclaimer that no further claims are to be made regarding this matter. Mr. Havens needs to agree that this is it, no further claims relating to this incident. Joe stated that there was some sewer work in the area. The main did back up but there were some cracks in the foundation. Phyllis Cooper, Treasurer, suggested a resolution authorizing her to pay this claim. Roger Wickes, County Attorney, stated the resolution can address no further claims. Mr. Suprenant stated this matter has been discussed and approved by the Sewer Board. He also stated the check should be made payable to All Pro and Mr. Havens per the Sewer Board recommendation and this will also be addressed in the resolution. A motion to approve resolution for settlement of Havens' sewer claim was moved by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Mr. Suprenant and adopted.

River Street – Sewer Line Repairs – This is a 24 inch gravity main that was inspected in late spring. Joe stated this needs to be repaired and prices are needed. He is seeking prices for both options, slip line and replacement. This pipe takes a considerable amount of flow and he needs to examine whether or not to slip line the pipe that would reduce the amount of flow. Another issue that needs to be resolved is the purchase of the truck from Lake George. The truck purchase has been approved and he is working with the Treasurer to determine if the finances are in order for the purchase.

Long Term Control Plan Progress – The report is in from CDM, the engineers on this project. They informed him of significant increases in costs. He has a meeting with DEC on Thursday on exactly what we have to do. This plan is mandated by the EPA and DEC, it is in the SPDES permit and needs to be completed by December 31, 2010. This long-term plan will identify problems and then develop a step process to address problems and a plan to correct those problems. The ultimate goal is to separate storm sewer drains from the regular sewer. Phyllis Cooper, Treasurer, stated \$700,000 due in BANs and she will detail out information and meet with Joe and Kevin Hayes, County Administrator. Joe stated he would like to establish a formal asset management plan and capital improvement plans for the Sewer District that will provide points in grant applications. The Long Term Control Plan is about 30% complete, mandated in 2005 and CDM, engineering firm, started in 2006.

Background Information – Joe stated at DEC he was a grade four waste water treatment plant operator, the highest grade certified operator, has ten years trouble shooting experience and training at DEC on various processing systems, compliance work, and some collection system work.

PUBLIC WORKS – In the absence of Willy Grimmke, Superintendent of Public Works, Kyle Vandewater, Deputy Superintendent, addressed the following items with the committee:

Warren County Snow/Ice Contract – Pilot Knob Area – Warren County is requesting a 5% decrease in the contract for fiscal year 2010 for Washington County to provide snow/ice services on .68 of a mile of Warren County highway in the Pilot Knob area, handout on file. A

motion to approve contract with Warren County for Snow & Ice removal, Pilot Knob area, was moved by Mr. Banks and seconded by Mr. Lindsay. Discussion. Mr. Suprenant mentioned if we are short on drivers and plows then why not contract with Warren County to plow the Washington County highway in the Pilot Knob area. Chairman Brown suggested discussing this after the Staffing Issues agenda item. A motion to table until after Staffing Issues was moved by Mr. Suprenant, seconded by Mr. Hurley and adopted. The committee reconsidered the Warren County Snow/Ice contract. A motion to take from the table was moved by Mr. Suprenant, seconded by Mr. Hurley and adopted. A motion to approve Warren County Snow/Ice contract at last year's amount, \$4,950.00, was moved by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Lindsay and adopted.

NYS DOT Snow and Ice Contract – handout on file. Kyle stated that Willy has outlined in the memo how the costs layout for labor, equipment and materials. Willy states in his handout, that "the State Snow and Ice Contract is a "Time and Materials" contract that is based on the actual time that labor and equipment are deployed on state roads, and the actual materials used on the roads." The costs are more than compensated. The handout in conclusion states "In summary, the Snow Contract adequately covers the cost of labor and materials, and cover the cost of equipment in a manner that is more than adequate. Furthermore, the advance payment at the beginning of the season reduces much of the cash flow burden that is often the case with state and federal contracts." The Board authorized an agreement in February 2008 with the State for snow and ice control that expired June 30, 2009. A motion to extend NYS Snow and Ice contract for one year was moved by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Campbell and adopted.

Staffing Issues – Chairman Brown asked what is the problem with having enough drivers. Kyle stated there are not enough drivers, no redundancy right now. Currently, one shift and one beat goes dark in Fort Ann if everyone shows up. It has happened in the past but they have had an extra man now there is no flexibility anymore. To compound the problem, there is no foreman in Cambridge, no Waste State Supervisor, on December 28th Jack McMillan, Road Foreman, will be out four weeks for surgery and the foreman in Hebron has been out since June with a health issue. Mr. Brown stated Solid Waste personnel previously were called up to cover in a snow storm. Kyle stated they are not trained in one-person plowing. Snow plows during the day are staffed with a driver and a wing man and in the evening and night shift one man. Mr. Hurley has not heard about not having enough drivers. Kyle stated Willy has put it in writing that the hiring freeze is impacting the ability to do their mission. Kyle stated they need more employees. The snow plow study will show were possibly other municipalities could cover for each other. Mrs. G. Hall stated at budget time Willy stated it was doable but now it is a crisis. Discussion. Kevin asked if the problem is the staffing pattern or is it because people are out. Kyle stated Highway has not been able to fill positions with the hiring freeze in effect. Solid Waste personnel also have not been backfilled. Mr. Suprenant asked if they could bring in other personnel once the call list has been thoroughly exhausted, everyone has had the opportunity to respond. Mr. Brown suggested asking retirees if they would be interested in a pinch. Kevin mentioned the 40 hour union clause. Per contract, the foreman cannot operate snowplows but can use their pickup trucks to plow intersections. It is not in the contract that two people are required. It is up to the driver and if alone, he does not have to operate the wing. Roger Wickes, County Attorney, read from the contract about staffing/snowplowing.

Staffing issues should be worked out either through a work group of this committee or through the Staffing Review Committee. Mrs. G. Hall stated the funding is not in the budget for any additional personnel. The committee will recess until tomorrow at 1 P.M. following the Finance Committee to continue discussion of staffing issues.

Progress on Snow Plow Study – A progress summary handout was distributed, attached. Mr. Hurley would like a schedule on how this study is going to progress, major events. Mr. Campbell stated it should be evident if something just jumps right out, apparent, that could be addressed and changed. Chairman Brown suggested having a meeting with the person doing the study. The firm doing this study will we asked to the January DPW meeting.

Miscellaneous:

- Budget Amendment – A motion to transfer funds between line items within funds, \$4,000 County Road Machinery, Road equipment to personnel, and \$55,000 County Road, from labor in road/bridge projects to maintenance labor to cover personnel costs through year end was moved by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Lindsay and adopted.
- Sticker Fee – Resolution No. 43 dated February 20, 2009 increased the Solid Waste Disposal ticket fee from \$1.50 to \$1.75 effective only until December 31, 2009 at which time it shall revert to \$1.50. A motion to keep the solid waste disposal tickets at \$1.75 was moved by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Lindsay and adopted.

Recycling Advisory Board Update – Andrew Pate and Geoffrey Ovington, Advisory Board members in attendance. A meeting was held last evening covering the subject of the auditing process. The renewal for the licensing of the haulers comes up the first of the year and something needs to be sent out. Mr. Ovington distributed a proposed Washington County Public Works Quarterly Waste Hauling Report, attached. He stated there is no need for a lot of unnecessary information. We only need to know if the waste is from this County or another, want to know the receiving facility and the number of tons. This is all information that the haulers have anyways. He did not know how to address appliances. This proposed spreadsheet is still a work in progress and should be run by Willy Grimmke, Superintendent DPW and the Vermont auditor. This spreadsheet should be in an Excel format and available electronically. This report is in addition to the hauler license fee and other information required by DPW.

Department Head Evaluation – Superintendent of Public Works - Mr. Hurley stated the County Administrator should participate in the evaluation. He recommends the County Administrator prepare a narrative identifying key factors to be taken into consideration at the evaluation.

Other Business –

Mr. Hurley raised the management issue of department heads criticizing the management/ leadership of county government and whether that is acceptable, desirable and who in fact is ultimately responsible for providing leadership of this organization. He stated there ought to be formal ways that people can express their concerns as managers to the people responsible for running the organization. Bringing issues to the media is inappropriate and unacceptable. The

Issue is authority, responsibility, accountability and management. This should be looked at in the coming year.

Chairman Brown asked Kyle about morale. He stated morale is at an all time low right now. They are trying to keep the wheels on the bus. Mr. Brown asked what is the administration trying to do to build up morale. Kyle stated we build up morale about appreciating our people.

The committee recessed until 1 P.M. December 2, 2009.

The Public Works Committee reconvened December 2, 2009 at 2:05 P.M.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Brown, Rymph, Scribner, Shay, Banks, Lindsay, Suprenant, Hurley, Campbell

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

SUPERVISORS: Wilbur, LaPointe

Barbara Winchell, Personnel Director

Kevin Hayes, County Administrator

Phyllis Cooper, Treasurer

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Jack McMillan, Road Foreman Highway

A Washington County Department of Public Works organizational chart was distributed, on file. Jack McMillan, stated there is no Highway Worker III in Fort Ann, vacant. Three workers do not have CDL licenses, they were grandfathered into the contract. At Jackson a Highway Supervisor II is vacant. Jack stated they need someone in charge there but he stops in the morning to make sure they have work to do. Jack stated his job is to oversee all the barns. There is also a Highway Worker II in Whitehall vacant and one in Fort Edward vacant.

Chairman Brown asked where Willy and Kyle were today. Jack stated both are not in today.

Kevin stated four positions were taken out of next year's staffing. He stated those four vacant positions mentioned were taken out.

Jack stated he is scheduled to go in the hospital December 28th and will be out for approximately four weeks.

On around the clock plowing, DPW will be short on one route. He has already worked on moving personnel around to cover for plowing.

Using Solid Waste personnel gets into contractual problems.

Jack stated they do an excellent job with snow removal. He stated they need one driver and one supervisor.

Kevin stated that the Solid Waste personnel have signed cards to be represented by the Teamsters. He stated they can probably negotiate usage of Solid Waste personnel when needed. The salary schedule is probably a little difference between the two departments, Highway and Solid Waste.

Jack stated in recent years personnel has been reduced from 61 employees to 56.

Highway went to one man plowing but added a shift. Going to 16 hours drove them to the 24-hour shift.

Mechanics are used if they have to but they try not to. They are needed in the garage to work on items that breakdown. According to the contract, they do not have to drive a truck.

Jack stated he plans to retire July 30th and recommends looking at the Supervisors of the Whitehall and Fort Edward barns as his replacement. G. Hall, Budget Officer, stated several retirements have been budget for in 2010. Kevin asked about personnel out on long-term illnesses. Jack stated he has a Highway Supervisor II in Hebron and one Highway Worker II in Granville pending retirement. Kevin asked of those two positions, does it add to his shortage. Jack stated he has those covered. Kevin stated another problem is that there are not able bodies in some positions due to vacancies but these positions have not been taken out of the budget and that causes problems. Kevin stated if long-term vacancies are a problem they need to be addressed.

Jack stated between 7:30 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. two men are in the trucks.

Jack does not agree with the decision to not backfill. He stated they are behind on paving the roads. He probably can pave the 28 miles of road with the current staff but other items would be delayed. Mr. Brown stated highway is doing more aggressive paving. Jack indicated that the scratch and burn paving procedure works well, is beneficial.

Jack stated in a snowstorm, the priority will be the state roads under contract and then the high traffic roads.

Chairman Brown asked what they need right now. Four vacancies are out of the budget and one upcoming retirement for a total of five. Jack stated that they are losing a mechanic and assistant supervising auto mechanic and the fleet is aging. Jack stated he has worked here for 36 years and stated Willy has been fantastic to work for and is doing the right thing. He also does not believe the Deputy Superintendent position should have been eliminated.

Jack stated this year, they lost a man in Whitehall, one in Fort Ann, a Highway Supervisor in Jackson and a resignation in Fort Edward plus the upcoming retirements, auto mechanic and assistant supervising auto mechanic, pending medical concerns with Hebron Supervisor and pending retirement in Granville.

Kevin suggested make it clear who is out of the budget and then start to look at the vacancies. Public Works needs to address these needs with the Staffing Review Committee.

Chairman Brown stated the committee needs feedback from Willy Grimmke, Superintendent of Public Works.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 P.M.