

PRESENT: M. J. Farinola, Chairman; Maryann Kasprzak, R. P. McDermott, Selectmen;
E. N. Small, Town Administrator; L. A. Ruest, Administrative Assistant

WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE: J. Ziolkowski of Environmental Landscape Management was present to discuss current road conditions due to significant snow amounts with the Board of Selectmen. M. J. Farinola asked Board members as to whether they would prefer to leave the roads as cleared to the width they are at present or whether the contractor should be asked to widen the roads. Given the high snow banks, mailboxes are not visible to plow truck drivers.

J. Ziolkowski reported that the Town's main roads are plowed to full width, however, smaller side roads are narrow and mailboxes are buried in snow. He stated that his truck drivers have started shelving the snow to make room for snow from upcoming predicted storms; however, this work was stopped due to the inability to see mailboxes.

The Board discussed its options in this regard. It was noted that winter is different this year in the number and severity of winter snow storms. Discussion also took place with regard to proper placement of mailbox posts within the Town's right of way, the need to provide direction to residents and consideration of adopting an ordinance to address mailboxes within the Town's right of way.

J. Ziolkowski offered the option of no further widening until the Board of Selectmen has an opportunity to communicate with residents. Suggestion was made to hand-deliver or mail notices to residents as well as include the notice as part of an email to residents and on the Town's website. Question was raised as to whether the school's calling tree system could be used as this is a matter of public safety.

The Board acknowledged that communications from residents with regard to snow removal matters should be referred to the Town Administrator to refer to the Road Agent who communicates directly with the winter road maintenance contractor. M. J. Farinola asked that any communications Board members receive directly be forwarded to E. N. Small. Should the communication be a matter of a safety issue, the Selectmen can contact J. Ziolkowski directly and include the Town Administrator. It was acknowledged that there are contractual terms and a need to follow the contract.

The Board indicated that there are a number of changes that may be needed in the contract such as wording relating to mailbox damage. All agreed that this winter's storms are extreme and unique with regard to mailbox damages, however, the Town has not obligation to repair mailboxes. Suggestion was made to consider a Selectmen's policy that the Town is not responsible for damages to mailboxes or other items placed in the Town's right of way. E. N. Small suggested the Board seek direction from counsel on the suggestion of a Selectmen's policy in this regard.

The Board drafted wording for a notice to be sent to residents. It was determined that the notice will be sent by mail, email, handed out at tomorrow's deliberative session and posted to the Town's website. A copy of the draft will be provided to Board members for review and approval as soon as possible.

J. Ziolkowski reported that next week, after additional anticipated snowstorms, he plans to move snow using a front end loader. Discussion of rates took place and it was agreed that J. Ziolkowski would perform 16 hours of loader work for an amount no greater than \$2,200. This cost is over and above the contract rate.

COMBINE TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR OFFICES: E. N. Small provided the Board with cost comparison information as requested by R. P. McDermott and M. Kasprzak at the January 5 Selectmen's meeting.

M. J. Farinola stated that there was no vote in this regard and indicated his concern that the information could not be other than opinion at this time.

MOTION: To have a cost comparison presented for review of the Board.

**MOTION: R. P. MCDERMOTT
SECOND: M. KASPRZAK
2 IN FAVOR, 1 OPPOSED, PASSES**

Discussion took place with regard to any handout of information not being presented by the Board of Selectmen but rather by the Department Heads of Town Clerk and Tax Collector. M. J. Farinola excused himself from the meeting at this time (11:58 am) due to another commitment.

The document outlining the impacts of combining the offices was reviewed at this time. Discussion took place with regard to the cost of the current separate offices compared to the costs of combined offices as well as the amount and types of training needed. Discussion of increased costs in employee benefits, current software versus the potential change to one or another software program and the training associated also took place. It was noted that the figures provided relate to training for the current employees who are certified in their current positions and not for new employees who might need training in both Town Clerk and Tax Collector duties and software programs. Minor changes were suggested.

The meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.