**Town of Stow**

Selectmen Meeting Minutes 8-27-2019

**Opening:** The Board of Selectmen meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm in Stow, Maine by Margaret Robbins.

**Present**

**Selectmen:** Margaret Robbins, Ray Ryan, Jim Wilfong

**Town Clerk:** Christine Carone **Treasurer:** Diana Davis **Secretary:** Carrie Garland

**Road Agent:** Harold Drew

**Residents/Guests:** Tom Gilmore, Cynthia Westlund, Jenet Westlund, Dave Tenney, Paul Buckley, Samuel Palmir, Jeff West, Kirstin Brown, Melvin & Sharon Peterson, Linda Libby, Heather & Farwell Sawin, Jeremy Kylie (Saco River Fire Department), Steve Dupuis (Planning Board).

**Approval of Agenda:** Agenda approved. Meeting Called to order 5:53

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes were approved for selectmen meetings held on August 13th.

**Clerks Business:**

**Treasures Report:**

**Open Issues:** Key Services has been approved to take care of the siding falling off the Town Hall.

**Public Comment: Kezar Lake Rd:**

The Kezar Lake Rd. Residents asked for a progress report. Peg explained a committee has been formed to investigate available grants. The committee members are Peg Robbins, Carrie Garland and Christine Carone. The committee will meet every Tuesday.

Tom Gilmore wants to know what the long-term goal is. Jim Wilfong explained that federal money goes to the state and the municipalities apply to the state. Tom Gilmore wants answers. Peg Robbins explained how the town will be responsible for grant matching and certain percentages that need to be met. Tom Gilmore reiterated that the roads need to be fixed. Period.

The Town has limited resources.

The Kezar Lake Rd. Crew wants to know what will be done in 1-3-year plan and should speak to the state. Do not take no for an answer.

Paul Buckley stated that dig safe has been on Kezar Lake Rd., and explained there were underground telephone lines running down the road.

Tom Gilmore wants to know where and what the quotes for gravel are. Jim Wilfong explained that the Selectmen are getting quotes for crushing and using the gravel from the pit the town already owns. Tom Gilmore said Coleman’s has good gravel and putting gravel on the portions of road that are tar is dangerous. At least bring in enough gravel to fill the worst potholes. Harold Drew agreed he could have the worst holes filled tomorrow. Tom Gilmore would like to know how much gravel is needed. It took 7 loads to resurface Pigeon Point Rd.

Dave Tenney commented that riding his motorcycle down Kezar Lake Rd. was treacherous.

Tom Gilmore asked what other options were going to be available if the town was unable to secure any grants. Raise taxes?

Jim Wilfong replied that raising the taxes will not be enough to fix all the roads in town.

Ray Ryan explained that the taxes are currently at the highest level available and this is causing a hardship for some residents.

Christine Carone explained how taxes are committed and can only be charged for what is raised through the town meeting, what is needed for the school budget, which is over a half million dollars, and then a percentage that is supplied by the state can be charged. We are currently charging the highest percentage available.

Ray Ryan also commented that school budget will be going up since there are more school aged children moving into town.

Someone commented “then don’t pay the school”

Kirstin Brown commented that she was on the school budget committee for years, and that there is no fighting them. Fryeburg Academy is in control, and when the bill is sent you have to pay it.

Jim Wilfong explained to the Kezar Lake Rd. residents that everyone know the situation and the selectmen are trying to figure a way to help everyone. Kezar Lake Rd. is not alone.

Tome Gilmore commented it’s the worst it has ever been. Cynthia Westlund commented she doesn’t like hearing that they are not alone.

Ray Ryan commented that the two roads groups that were present live on roads that are a mile or less long and are dead ends. Someone start a Go Fund Me page. (Laughter)

Cynthia Westlund commented that she was happy to see things were being done and would like to be informed in the progress being made.

Jim Wilfong will reach out to the Town of Lovell and see if the two towns can work together.

Paul Buckley wants to know what happens in five years if the town can not stay afloat and is unable to maintain the roads etc. Jim Wilfong responded that it could go back to being a plantation and run by the state.

Steve Dupuis explained that the planning board and the selectmen are working together in creating a plan for the town. The current tax burden and up coming taxes, revaluation and maintain a tax threshold all need to be considered. The planning board is working on variances, and prioritizing the ordinances needed to keep the town focused on the current issues at hand as well as estimating what the future holds.

Steve was told to pound sand.

Again, it was mentioned don’t pay the school (Dave Tenny).

Cynthia Westlund asked about going to a fiscal year and collecting two tax bills a year in order to have money available through out the year.

It was explained this is an option, the first payment would be larger in order to get the town in line. The selectmen will look into this.

**Wiley Rd.**

Melvin Peterson explained the history of the Selectmen and Harold Drew coming up to Wiley Rd. and what was discussed on being done. Ditches needed to be dug, a culvert needed to be put at the upper end of the road by the gate and a culvert should be placed in front of the Petersons driveway. Mr. Peterson stated he didn’t want or need a culvert there, a swail would be fine.

It was brought to the attention of the Selectmen that Mr. Peterson had removed the culvert by the fence, and ditches were filling in. this was allowing the water to run down and wash out Wiley Rd. again. A letter was sent to all residents on the road stating the ramifications of tearing apart what a town crew had done on a town road.

Mr. Peterson said he found the letter threatening. The Selectmen said that was not their intentions but wanted the residents of Wiley Rd. to be aware that they could not remove culverts placed by the town.

Mr. Peterson agrees he removed the culvert because it was not big enough for him to access his field, but he did not fill in the swail. He is willing to put the culvert back, but it needs to be bigger. He has purchased a culvert. 150 years and they have had no trouble. They would prefer a stone swail be put in so Sharon can get her antique car out. No need for a culvert at the bottom of the driveway. The road work was not completed as they wanted and was not done.

Kirstin Brown confronted the selectmen with statues and right always, town road and turn arounds. Kirstin Brown said there should have been more communication instead of sending a letter. The Selectmen should be ashamed of themselves.

Ray Ryan, Peg Robbins and Jim Wilfong stated how they had been there several times and met with Melvin Peterson in regards to the road.

Sharon Peterson said the exposed root from ditching killed one of her trees. It was asked if the trees were in the town right of way?

Heather Sawin commented that the objective is to access to the upper field. She was quite taken back by the letter as well, and is looking for safe passage on Wiley Rd.

Linda Libby also found the letter threatening and has never complained about the road. Her son is a civil engineer, who was the engineer used to fix Wiley Rd.? The Selectmen and Harold Drew collaborated on how to fix Wiley Rd. For over 40 years the family has been fixing Wiley Rd. What needs to be done now?

Peg Robbins responded that fabric and gravel to bring the road up.

Selectmen agree the road has sunken down over the years from lack of maintenance. The Selectmen also agree there needs to be a turn around up by the gate for plow trucks.

Melvin Peterson doesn’t think an ambulance could get in there. Jim Wilfong said that the road is smooth enough to get emergency personnel in there. There is currently no money for gravel to raise the road. Harold Drew said he will come and smooth it up again.

Melvin Peterson bought the culvert and the town agrees to install it. The residents of Wiley Rd. agree to have a turn around for plow trucks at the end by the gate.

**Fire Department:**

The contract for the town of stow has been written and needs to go in front of the board for approval. Then the town will need to sign.

**Planning Board:**

Steve Dupuis came on behalf of the planning board to keep the selectmen informed of the progress and projects being worked on. Commercial water extraction is top priority, and the planning board is in agreement that NO commercial water extraction should be allowed in the Town of Stow and hopes the selectmen will back that ordinance.

There is an ordinance in place that people can not live in campers. A letter should be sent from the selectmen addressing the few in town that are.

There needs to be a reinforcement and fine set in place for those who do not want to follow town ordinances.

The selectmen need to think about how to budget for a code enforcement officer.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm

Next meeting will be held on September 10, 2019

Minutes submitted by Carrie Garland