



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: Wednesday, January 20, 2016 – Workshop Meeting
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall, Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Chairman G. Woodbury, Vice Chair Stevens, Clerk C. Woodbury, Members Fritze & Pepe and Administrator Gaudette

At 6:15 p.m. Chairman Woodbury called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Joint Meeting with the Financial Management Planning Committee (FMPC)

Mr. Gaudette reported that this is a joint meeting with Financial Management Planning Committee.

6:15 p.m. Public Hearing #1 - Comprehensive Roads Project

Mr. Gaudette presented a Power Point on a Comprehensive Road Improvements Project for Spencer. He introduced members of the FMPC: Rich Hebson, Tom Parker, and Paul McLaughlin and noted that Selectmen Pepe and Stevens are also members. He noted that the goal of the FMPC is to develop long term financial and capital plans. At this time, they are revisiting the major backlog of roads to determine both short and long term improvements moving forward.

Bill Scarpati of Stantec was present to discuss the pavement management analysis. He noted that the life of pavement, known as the PCI score starts out with a score of 100 in “do nothing condition” and moves down to a score of “0” in “poor condition” and in need of base rehabilitation. Spencer has the lowest PCI of its comparison communities with an overall score of 51.

A survey conducted in the fall revealed many major roads are in need of rehab and resurfacing with \$34 million needed to restore the roadways, including drainage and bridges. Mr. Gaudette reviewed funding scenarios over the next five years ranging from \$5.5 million for road maintenance only; \$10.5 to maintain the current backlog; \$14.5 for a proactive approach; and \$18.5 an aggressive approach.

U & F Superintendent Steven Tyler noted current active projects which include Main Street TIP reconstruction with funding from State and Federal Aid and the use of Chapter 90 money to pay for the design. CDBG projects include Mechanic Street which is nearly finished and Chestnut Street is next in line. Tree work and culvert replacement is currently taking place on Charlton Road in accordance with recommendations of the MassDOT Safety Audit. This places the Town in the best position to obtain State funding for the pavement portion of the road, however the budget is being used to fund the prep work. Repairs for N. Spencer Road are being proposed for the near future and include the bridge repair near the Abbey.

Administrator Gaudette explained that Chapter 90 funding is administered by MassDOT with Towns receiving reimbursement on approved expenses. Several major projects have also been funded by Chapter 90. He cited an MMA report which indicated a \$362 million statewide Chapter 90 funding gap, with Spencer’s gap estimated at \$1.3 million annually. Funding the project with Chapter 90 and current revenue is not enough and some form of a Proposition 2 ½ Override is needed. He explained the 3 types of Overrides:

1. General Override - funds are earmarked for a stated purpose in the first year and years after can be spent on anything.

2. Stabilization Override – funds used for specific purpose in the first year and in subsequent years upon authorization.
3. Debt Exclusions – funds used only for specific purpose only until debt is retired.

A proposed tax rate increase was discussed using the three different funding scenarios.

The hearing was opened to public at 7:04 pm

Selectmen Stevens noted with a lower increase to the tax rate the result would be less work being done.

Mr. Tyler said the lower cost scenario will result in further reduction of the PCI and place the Town in the same position in less than 10 years.

Chairman Woodbury pointed out that cold patch is double the cost of asphalt and asked what the life expectancy of the roads will be by investing \$34 million. Mr. Tyler said the estimate is 18-20 years versus 10-12 years with reclaim and resurface and 8-10 years for double chip.

Mr. Al Atchue asked if the Stabilization Override is forever. Mr. Gaudette said it is, however it can only be used for the stated purpose unless it goes back to the voters.

The hearing was closed at 7:32 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Administrative Assistant

Referenced Materials

Comprehensive Roads Project Presentation #1