

PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

Pursuant to the notice filed with the Town Clerk, a virtual public meeting of the Public Works Commission in accordance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Order of March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law was held at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 14, 2021. This meeting has been properly noticed with the Town Clerk and has been recorded.

PRESENT:

Commissioners:

James Terry
Andrew Boardman
David DeLong
Jef Fasser
K.C. Winslow

Staff:

Alan H. Cathcart, Director
Aaron I. Miklosko, MSFM, Highway and Grounds Superintendent
Erik Shaw, Assistant
Steve Dookran, Town Engineer
Stephane Cherduville, Public Works Engineer
John Rogers, Water & Sewer Superintendent
Nelson Mui, Management Analyst
Bob Hill, Management Analyst
Paul Reinhardt, Management Analyst
Melissa Simoncini, Environmental Services Program Administrator
Anna R. Trout, Administrative & Special Projects Coordinator

Other:

Delia Kaye (Director of Natural Resources)
Terri Ackerman (Select Board Observer)
Robert Hilsinger (League of Women Voters Observer)
Stanley Lucks
Nancy Nelson
Rod Riedel, 324 Main Street (Council on Aging Observer)
Karlen Reed, 83 Whit's End Road
Brian Rosborough, 56 Elm Street

A: ACTION ITEMS

A-1 through A-3 - The meeting was convened at 4:00 PM. by Commissioner Terry. Attendance roll call of commissioners was made as follows: James Terry, Aye, Andrew Boardman, Aye, and Jef Fasser, Aye.

K.C. Winslow and David DeLong joined the meeting after meeting minutes were approved.

The meeting minutes from March 10, 2021 were approved by roll call: James Terry, Aye, Andrew Boardman, Aye, and Jef Fasser, Aye.

A review of the calendar including future proposed meeting dates occurred. The next meeting is on May 12, which will include the Water/Sewer Rate Public Hearing, Planning and Residential Infill (Someone from the Planning Division will inform the group about potential Zoning articles that may have some impact on water capacity) and Town Meeting Preparation.

D: DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

D-1: Roads Program Public Meeting

Town Engineer, Steve Dookran, introduced Stephane Cherduville, Public Works Engineer, who provided a presentation on the Roads Program for 2020/2021.

Mr. Cherduville explained that the goal is to repair and maintain the Town's 108 mile roadway network consisting of local, collector and arterial roads at a high condition level. Concord Public Works communicates these needs to other boards and commissions in Town in an attempt to obtain adequate funding. As roadwork and right-of-way improvements can be very involved, the engineering division prioritizes work by coordinating efforts with planned utility work. Drainage problems are also addressed (provided funding is available) along with safety improvements when applicable.

A Pavement Condition Index (PCI) is an industry standard metric that is utilized to determine a priority for road repair. The PCI scale is from 1 – 100, with 100 being the very best condition. In 2018, an independent service provider (StreetScan) conducted a field survey of all Concord Roads. The average PCI rating at that time was 78. It is recommended that an updated inventory is conducted every three years.

The specific type of treatment used to repair the roads is dependent upon the road's condition. A five year plan is created based on PCI and optimization process. Progress is measured and the plan is re-evaluated every three years.

As a result of COVID-19, the implementation of the planned 2020 roads program was delayed. This coming construction season will include 2020 and 2021 roads program initiatives.

Phase I of the program to be performed by Newport Construction, includes Warner Street, Park Lane, Lewis Road, Bedford Court and Partridge Lane. Newport is scheduled to commence this work next month. Phase II will include

2.3 miles of roadway repairs with a combination of reclamation and mill and overlay treatments in the Prescott Neighborhood. The Prescott neighborhood includes Prescott Road, Cranefield Road, Arrowhead Road, Peter Spring Road and Minuteman Drive. Phase III will include Hubbard Street and the Stow Street parking lot reconstruction. Additional parking spaces will be added to the Stow Street parking lot. The plans for Hubbard Street include reconstructing sidewalks and installation of drainage infrastructure along with adding a bike lane, sidewalks with bump-outs at crosswalk locations and a new roadway.

Additional construction will include mill and fill repairs on arterial roads and 5-6 miles of crack seal Town wide for road preservation.

The sources for funding for these projects comes from State Aid (Chapter 90), Complete Streets Tier 3 Construction Program, Encumbered Road Repair funds, Sidewalk Improvement funds, Road Repair funds, CPW Drainage Improvement funds and a 2021 Bonding Authorization Request in the sum of \$1,250,000.

Understanding that the Roads public meeting would be made available to the general public via Zoom, Mr. Churduville took this opportunity to provide some public outreach regarding the Clean Water Act (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System “NPDES”) and the Massachusetts MS4 General Permit Phase II. The focus of this effort is stormwater pollution prevention. All residents can help prevent pollutants from going into catch basins, which flow into streams and rivers, by following guidelines as detailed on the Town’s website at

<https://concordma.gov/175/Stormwater-Management-Program-MS4>

Communication regarding upcoming construction is made by neighborhood flyers, which are distributed prior to construction on any road, and updates on the Town’s website. Future Roads Programs public meetings will be held in the fall, so that input can be incorporated for the construction season.

D-2: Concord Public Works Tree Planting Guide

Aaron Miklosko, Highway and Grounds Superintendent and Tree Warden, explained that this CPW tree guide was a collaborative effort with Concord resident Brian Rosborough and the Friends of Concord Trees group. This professionally designed tree guide will assist Concord Public Works with communicating tree planting initiatives to residents, businesses and other members of the community. Robert O’Brien of O’Brien Designs assisted with the design and development of the document.

The document begins with an overview of the program. The guide goes on to explain about the planting program. A Public Shade Tree is defined by Mass General Law Chapter 87 as a tree planted in the right-of-way and is the property

of the Town, under the jurisdiction of the Town's Tree Warden. The Town does not have jurisdiction over school department or private trees.

Information on how to plant a tree is provided, including how to care for and prune. It is important to pick the right tree for the right location. There is a chart indicating thirty recommended trees for planting in Concord. When you unfold the brochure there is a poster that depicts how these trees look in different seasons. We look forward to distributing these brochures to interested residents. This has also been placed on our website.

Brian Rosborough expressed his appreciation for the support the Town has provided for this effort. He also mentioned that planting trees in the right-of-way tends to provide the added benefit of slowing traffic in addition to sequestering CO2 emissions.

Appreciation was also expressed to Erik Shaw, Assistant Highway and Grounds Superintendent for his efforts in creating this brochure.

D-3: Heywood Meadow Stone Wall Extension in Public Right-of-Way

Director Cathcart informed the Commission that Natural Resources Director, Delia Kaye had approached CPW's Engineering Division seeking guidance as to an interest in extending a stone wall along a portion of Heywood Meadow. Upon review of the proposed layout, it was determined that a portion of this wall would fall within the Right-of-Way. As such Director Kaye was informed that the Public Works Commission would need to review and approve this request as they are responsible for approving any structures within the Town Right-of-Way. In this case, that would be the extension of a stone wall.

Ms. Kaye provided some background about Heywood Meadow. The Heywood Meadow Stewardship Committee obtained a grant to replace about 400 feet of the east wall in 2012. The curved west wall was replaced in 2016. The concrete posts looking north need to be replaced with an extension of the east wall.

Town Engineer, Steve Dookran, informed the Commission that the engineering division had reviewed the preliminary design and was comfortable that they could work with Ms. Kaye in ensuring final design and installation could be reasonably accommodated, should the Commission agree to the concept presented. Director Cathcart also noted that the Highway Grounds Superintendent would be involved to ensure routine maintenance within the Right-of-Way would not be compromised.

Commissioner Boardman **MOVED** as follow: In accordance with the Town of Concord "Private Digging of Roads" Bylaw as amended in Article 47 of the Town meeting in 1992, the Public Works Commission hereby authorizes the Natural Resources Division to extend an existing stone wall along the

Lexington Road Right-of-Way (ROW) at the south-east intersection of Heywood Street and Lexington Road, abutting Town-owned land at 150 Lexington Rd. (Parcel ID 0239) two to three feet inside the ROW as depicted on the plan titled “Heywood Meadows dated 3/26/21” with the following conditions;

- The final design and location of the wall will not create a hazard to pedestrians or motorists and comply with applicable design standards including the AASHTO Roadside Design Guidelines.
- The final location of the wall still leaves a reasonable amount of ROW for potential roadway-related improvements.
- A ROW permit is obtained for any construction within the ROW and inspection by Engineering staff is performed for acceptance.
- An as-built plan is prepared for CPW’s records.
- A document is prepared for official records attesting that the wall is wholly owned and will be maintained to an acceptable standard by the owners of the abutting property (150 Lexington Rd. or Parcel ID 0239)

Jeff Fasser **SECONDED**, and it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** by roll call vote as follows:

- James Terry – Aye
- Andrew Boardman – Aye
- David DeLong – Aye
- Jef Fasser – Aye
- KC Winslow – Aye

D-4: Water/Sewer FY22 Budget Overview

Director Cathcart explained that both the Water and Sewer Divisions operate as enterprise funds, meaning all costs associated with the operation and improvements of these services are supported by user and special service fees. System expansions and larger capital projects may be funded through Borrowing that is paid back over time through these same fees.

Ninety five percent of the community is served by Concord Water, which is comprised of a complex network of pipes that deliver water that originates at a number of different sources of supply. Concord is served by a combination of groundwater supplies and one large surface water supply, which is Nagog Pond. There are over 130 miles of water distribution mains within the system with a significant portion that have reached or are nearing the end of their useful life (75-125 yrs.).

Director Cathcart noted that over the next several years, the Town can anticipate having to make a significant investment in the water system, especially in the area of water treatment. Recent changes in drinking water regulations combined with Nagog Pond water rights challenges have set the Town up for some unusually costly investments. The Water Division is currently involved in

the replacement of the deep water intake pipe within Nagog Pond. The first phase alone is a \$2,000,000 investment. While performing this work, the shallow section of this intake pipe will be investigated and depending on what is observed, may result in a second phase of replacement or rehabilitation work. As has been fairly well publicized in the past, there is still a need to complete the design and construct the long anticipated drinking water filtration facility, as the Nagog Pond water is currently unfiltered.

It was also noted that in accordance with recent changes in the State's drinking water regulations, the Water Division is also testing all of its supplies for PFAS. Given the fact that the water supply industry is only just beginning to understand that it is a ubiquitous chemical that appears to be found throughout the environment at very low levels, and is being regulated at concentrations in the parts per trillion (very close to the limits of its detection), more and more systems are learning that they may be forced to provide emergency treatment at water supplies previously believed to be OK. Based on findings in neighboring communities Concord may find itself in such a need. In anticipation of this rapidly developing and significant occurrence, outreach, education and awareness will likely need to be provided, along with budgeting for these previously unanticipated expenses that could be in the tens of millions of dollars.

Director Cathcart indicated that the Town would have a clearer picture of contamination risks and potential treatment needs within the next few months. Given the increased costs in water treatment already identified at Nagog Pond (due primarily to project delays attributed to water rights challenges and permitting delays) and the more recent concerns identified for the potential contamination of PFAS within some or all of the groundwater supplies, staff has begun to evaluate potential user fee increases required to cover these costs. Recommendations will be provided at the up-coming May water and sewer rate hearing. On a positive note, the economic impact of these rate increases may be somewhat buffered by fact that the Town has qualified for a low-interest loan through the State's drinking water "revolving fund" (SRF). The Town will also be evaluating additional funding sources that may become available through the pending Federal "infrastructure" loan or grant programs.

With respect to the municipal wastewater system, one third of the Town is served by municipal sewer. We continue to be challenged by wastewater capacity constraints identified at the wastewater treatment plant and manage this capacity constraint carefully. It is also notable that we are nearing the end of an extended (ten year) service contract with a third party vendor who performs the day to day operations of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. We will be going out to bid soon. While the Treatment Plant underwent a significant overhaul in 2007, equipment is beginning to reach the end of its useful life. As such, we should anticipate investing in scheduled replacement of some of those needs. The Sewer fund is far more stable. We anticipate an increase of about two

percent. The Sewer Improvement Fee is there in the event it is needed to enhance or create new capacity.

D-5: Director's Report

- **Solid Waste and Recycling Program (Presented by Melissa Simoncini, Environmental Services Program Administrator) –**
 - **Compost Site** – The compost site has been open since April 3 with 1,500 residents bringing leaves and brush and the paint shed open for residents wanting to drop off usable latex paint, and oil based paint – and pickup paint for home projects.
 - **Bioassay** – A bioassay test was conducted to determine if there is herbicide residue in the compost. The test confirms no evidence of herbicide damage, which is consistent with previous years.
 - **Business and Resident Recycling Event** – Approximately 100 participants attended this event on April 2, which provided an opportunity for local businesses and residents to recycle computers, electronics, fluorescent bulbs, batteries and document shredding.
 - **DropOff Event** – The spring DropOff event will occur on Saturday, May 15. No SwapOff will be offered. Pre-Registration is required with a maximum of 550 residents. Volunteers are welcome.

- **Engineering (Presented by Steve Dookran, Town Engineer) –**
 - **Cambridge Turnpike** – Work resumed over the Crosby Pond area a few weeks ago. Utilities have been moved to underground. Road paving is scheduled for April 21.
 - **Hubbard Street** – A neighborhood meeting was held on March 23.
 - **National Grid Construction** – Work has been completed on Bedford Court.
 - **ROW and Driveway Permits** – As a result of good weather, the permitting season opened on April 5, instead of the usual April 15. We have started to migrate from an old to a newer “Full Circle” software, which provides interconnectivity with other Town Departments.

- **Highway, Grounds and Cemetery (Presented by Aaron Miklosko, Highway and Grounds Superintendent) –**
 - **Catch Basin Cleaning and Repair** – CPW crews have cleaned 70 catch basins during the month of March. Repairs have also been completed where needed.
 - **Cambridge Tpk.** – A Beaver Dam was breached, working with Natural Resources.
 - **Roadway and Sidewalk Repair** – Crews are out patching roadways and sidewalks.

- **Compost Site** – Staff has been busy assisting residents at the compost site. Completed compost and wood chips are also available to residents.
- **Outdoor Dining Setups** – These setups have been installed for safe outdoor seating for residents.
- **Water/Sewer (Presented by John Rogers, Water/Sewer Superintendent)-**
 - **Water Conservation** – A presentation on Water Conservation was provided by Alex Wahlstrom, the Senior Environmental Regulatory Coordinator, to the Library via Zoom.
 - **Lowell Road Pump Station** – Work is about one month away from completion
 - **Assabet Pump Station** – Landscaping is being completed with work near completion. Aged equipment has been replaced by more efficient and safer equipment.
 - **Nagog Pond Intake** – Construction has begun with barges set up to put the new intake pipe into place.

D-6: Commissioner’s Comments

There was a question about construction activity on Walden Street across Route 2 prior to Walden Pond. This is a staging area for National Grid, who are doing work in that area into Lincoln.

D-7: Public Comments

None.

Commissioner Boardman MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 PM, Commissioner DeLong **SECONDED**, and it was **VOTED** by roll call vote as follows: James Terry, Aye, Andrew Boardman, Aye, David DeLong, Aye, and KC Winslow, Aye.

ADJOURNED: 5:48 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Approved,

Anna R. Trout
Administrative & Special Projects Coordinator
Concord Public Works

James Terry
Public Works Commission