

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
August 10, 2020
MINUTES**

Call to Order

5:30 pm – Chairman Robertson called the meeting to order

Present: Andrew Robertson, Chairman; Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman, Fred McGarry, and Alden Dill, Selectman in person and Cynthia McHugh via ZOOM.

The following was added by the town administrator as the recorded wasn't working until later in the transcript.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Chairman Robertson asks all to rise and pledge allegiance to the Flag

Steve Rollins – Highway Agent – Highway Department Equipment

Steve is present to talk with the Board.

Chairman Robertson stated that the Board wanted Steve in to meet personally about issues involving the Highway Department.

He asked Steve if he would want this discussion in non-public or in public.

Mr. Rollins stated that it did not matter and said public is fine.

(Recording starts) ... Chairman Robertson stated that highlighted recently by the tropical storm that they had. He stated that they had eleven or twelve, he couldn't recall which, trees down on roads during the evening. No one could find the road agent. The highway crew didn't seem to have a plan of action,

He recollection in talking with some people, that Steve didn't make contact with the highway crew until 10:00 am the next morning. That is just unacceptable for a weather event like that.

Mr. Rollins stated that he was out until 10:00 pm that night getting brush off the roads. He stated that they could ask the fire department.

Chairman Robertson asked to step up to the mic so that he could be heard.

Mr. Rollins repeated that he was out until 10:00 pm that night taking brush off the road himself. He didn't call the guys in because (couldn't understand). He piled brush off the road. He saw the crew at 6:30 am the next morning which is their start time and sent them out to check on the piles that (couldn't hear).

He continued that they could check with the fire department.

Chairman Robertson stated that he has checked with the fire department because the police department finally notified the fire department and the fire department agreed to go out and clear the roads.

Mr. Rollins stated that he did get a couple of calls from a number that he did not recognize while his phone was on the charger and apparently it was a new officer, he guessed. At that point, he was already out.

Chairman Robertson stated that beyond that Steve, John and he had a conversation with him on June 1st, gave Steve some written instructions about some of the things that they were concerned about.

In particular, they mentioned getting a punch list of road projects so they would have an idea of what was going on in town with regard to roads.

They mentioned not renting equipment until they had an agreement in place like they had with the prior road agent.

That was June 1st. That really didn't seem to happen so they had a meeting here on June 29th. They gave him a few more concerns, basically the same thing, they wanted a punch list of road projects, an outline for the season and they gave him a five-day time limit on that, present it, never showed up.

They asked him and gave him written instruction to provide them with some detail on his time cards as to what time he was spending on projects, that sort of thing. Didn't show up. They get time cards with straight lines through them with a signature.

It just doesn't seem that he was much interested in working with them or letting them know what's going on.

Mr. Rollins stated that he has been working nights and weekends doing hazardous trees on top of working with the crew during the week so he is putting in more than 40 hours a week.

He has no problem with that, he understands that is what this job is. He didn't know how much more they wanted from him.

Chairman Robertson stated he thought that they outlined pretty clearly what the Board wants from him. They want to know what he is doing; they want to know a timeline of the projects; they don't want to see

Mr. Rollins stated that the timeline for the projects has been held up by meetings for trees. He stated that he has asked if he has a "go" on the road, he still hasn't gotten that yet from the Board.

Chairman Robertson stated that he would just throw something in here right now, not that it is the most importance. They also got contacted today by the residents of Candia Road and wanted to know who was cutting down trees there because the ones with "white" marks on them appeared to been cut and the ones over the size limit appeared to been cut.

Mr. Rollins added that our insurance company has told John that any tree that was marked as a hazard must go and that was a discussion in one of the meetings and Fred was there.

Selectman McGarry stated that these were trees that apparently to the people or residents that weren't marked.

Chairman Robertson stated that some of them were marked, some of them weren't marked.

Mr. Rollins stated that Carl, who is the tree guy, is taking brush and it has to be under a certain size. He has a caliper that he measures them for. Those he didn't need a meeting for.

Selectman McGarry stated correct, but they are stating that that is not the case.

Mr. Rollins stated that Carl is cutting, he is not so Carl knows what he is supposed to be cutting and what he is not supposed to be cutting.

As far as marked trees go, the ones that are being cut are, everything that is marked because it is a hazard and the insurance company said, look, you know it's a hazard, it has to go and that is what he is taking.

Chairman Robertson said that well, he would go back to his original train of thought here and that is equipment rental.

We asked you not to rent the town any of your own equipment until they had a formal agreement in place.

Mr. Rollins stated that he donated \$1,000.00 in equipment rental last week.

Chairman Robertson stated that he saw that the bill had some discounts on it and such but it's....

Mr. Rollins stated that the only thing that he rented to you guys was a truck, one day. Other than that, and that was just to make the project go quicker. It was a last-minute add-on on Middle Road and they had the opportunity to do it so they did it. It wasn't, it made the ditch better. The resident involved was happy to have it done so they went ahead and did it. It was a last-minute thing and they got it done. If he can stretch a dollar further, that is what he is going to do.

But as far as that, he donated a compactor, he donated his loader, his 10-wheeler dump truck on a Saturday with himself as the operator.

As far as what he was charging the town, he was charging the exact same thing that Mark Young charged the town and with or without an operator.

He is doing the same thing. He looked through Mark's bills and he is doing it just the same way he did.

Chairman Robertson stated that he thought that the concern that they have Steve, is that they had a specific agreement with Mark with steps spelled out to avoid any conflict of interest or perception of conflict of interest.

We don't have a written agreement with you. They have asked for it three times now. They got a discounted bill. That is still not what they are looking for.

Mr. Rollins stated that he asked Pete what he wanted and he looked through the invoices with Pete and this is what he said. He continued that he isn't trying to do anything sneaky. He is not trying to abuse the position. He is trying to stretch the dollar as far as he could.

Selectman Dill asked what about the (couldn't understand). He just went through (couldn't understand). When they first met, it was about the hammer rental. (Couldn't understand).

Mr. Rollins stated that he had forgot about that, that he was right.

So, that was on Friday and they were on Middle Road and the chairman interrupted to say that it would have been just Steve because the crew doesn't work on Friday.

Mr. Rollins stated that actually, he was the guy in the road directing traffic and the operator was Dave so you had him for nothing like you normally would and Dave ran the excavator like he normally would.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that was the question, why it was on a Friday, without a crew?

Mr. Rollins stated that it just happened that the machine was on the trailer coming from a job that had ended early and it was a good, fill-in project and it saved the town the cost of a move, if you notice on the slip that there was not a move charge and the chairman acknowledged that he did notice that.

Mr. Rollins continued that it saved the town that. If he can save the town a buck by doing a fill-in, that is what he is going to do.

Chairman Robertson stated well, what the Board is thinking Steve, is, it seems like the highway agent part of your life right now is the secondary portion and Mr. Rollins interrupted to state that it is the priority right now. You may not think so. He is there every day. He is dragging brush. He hasn't seemed too many road agents do as much physical work as he has been doing.

He feeds the chipper. Nights the guys go home and a lot of times he will go out and cut down some dead trees. It's cooler in the evening and he can get a little mess cleaned up and have some piles of brush for them to chip up the next day.

There is less traffic so even after he has been there all day, he still goes out and does a little bit in the evening. He has no problem working lots of hours, he likes it. He is trying to get ahead. There is a lot of catch up to do and he is trying to get it done.

Chairman Robertson stated that he didn't know what the Board's pleasure was at this point. Does Cindy have any questions?

Selectwoman McHugh stated that she didn't understand, she was kind of curious, Steve, why are you working on weekends? You don't have to. You have guys working for you Monday through Thursday. You have to put them to work. She knows that he saved them delivery charge on the machine but it can't be that much. Put the guys to work. Have them do their job.

Mr. Rollins stated that \$300.00 is \$300.00 and like he said, he was coming back from a job. He figured that they had the afternoon, figured they would pound out the little bit of ledge in a few spots.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked if he was busy at the pit during the day, is that why he was doing this at night? You do have a business.

Mr. Rollins stated that he was working with the crew during the day.

Chairman Robertson stated, Steve, he has seen this crew multiple days during the day and he hasn't seen you. I saw you on Thursday cutting brush with them and he saw him one day up on Middle Road the week before. He has seen them without you a lot of times.

He is town all day. He has actually made it a point to see what is going on with the highway crew. If you are working with them, you are working with them all day, every day, Monday through Thursday?

Mr. Rollins stated yes, unless he is coming here dropping off time, or you know, have to run back to get a shovel or something like that, yes, he is pretty much with them.

He was over there with them on Middle Road, basically for the whole project. Candia Road, been there all but this morning, he chipped some brush (couldn't here).

He continued and stated to ask the crew how much he is around. Ask them how much he gets done when they are not there.

Selectwoman McHugh stated that he shouldn't be working without the guys Steve and how come, is there something wrong with our truck that he has to use his to which Mr. Rollins stated that actually yes, it has a maxi-can blown.

Selectwoman McHugh asked if that was a big change is it? That is not a big fix is it?

Mr. Rollins stated no. It was last minute. They were in position to do that so (couldn't understand) and got it done and like he said, he subtracted the operator off the bill so he wouldn't be double paid.

Vice Chairman Pitman started, so what got done today when Matt didn't come in? He only saw two pickups there.

Mr. Rollins stated that they got brush cleaned up on Candia Road and they got some ditching done on Ridge Road and the post office had said that they weren't going to deliver mail to a resident out there so they moved the ditch behind their mailbox up by Glenn Youngs and filled that in.

Grading got done on Middle Road and grading got done on Ritchie Road, Baker and the end of Perkins Road. That was what was done. It was pretty hot today so this afternoon, he tried to put the guys in air conditioning. This morning they did what they had to do for handwork.

Chairman Robertson asked if there were other questions from the Board.

Selectman Dill asked what they were using to ditch to which Mr. Rollin answered, an excavator and Selectman Dill stated that he saw the backhoe go up past his place.

Mr. Rollins stated that that was this morning and Selectman Dill stated it was about 11:45 and Mr. Rollins stated that it was on its way back at 11:45, coming down the street.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked so, you rented Glenn Young's machine for two weeks and now he is out and there is a new Komatsu or something down at the shed to which Mr. Rollins stated yes.

The vice chairman asked if that was Mr. Young's to which Mr. Rollins answered no.

Chairman Robertson asked where did they get it?

Mr. Rollins stated that that is why he thought he was actually here. This is all kind of like, not why I thought I was here.

Why he was here was to see if the Board would be interested in this piece of equipment or trying or using for "zero dollars" today. It didn't cost them anything today.

Chairman Robertson asked what he meant by if they were interested in using it? Interested in leasing it or purchasing it or

Mr. Rollins stated a rent or lease to purchase or something. Any piece of equipment for the town, would get a lot of work done.

Chairman Robertson interrupted and stated that it was absolutely nothing that they had budgeted for and Mr. Rollins stated that he understood that.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that people aren't paying their taxes. He didn't know how they were going to buy the fuel this winter. He didn't know what the machine went for. It looked pretty nice. (Couldn't understand).

Mr. Rollins stated that this is why he was here, to discuss the savings and if it would be anything that they would be interested in but apparently that is not what he got when he got there.

Chairman Robertson stated no, and quite frankly Steve, they thought that they were going to talk about equipment maybe a couple of meetings ago. He knew three meetings ago.

Mr. Rollins stated that he tried to log in and he didn't have all the information apparently. It didn't happen. He stated that he was sorry and that is why they rescheduled.

Chairman Robertson continued, yep, I don't know how the Board wants to proceed at this point. He didn't know if they have a lot more questions and he asked Selectman McGarry if he had something to which he answered no but he thought that the big question was, was when he was going to provide all the information that Andy and John had requested from and the chairman interjected that the Board had requested in the last letter they gave him.

Mr. Rollins continued, okay, so two problems. He didn't know who was doing the roadside mowing. Okay, he was not brought in on the bids which would be a help to him, who they did hire.

Chairman Robertson stated that it is actually up to them and Mr. Rollins stated that it is under his recommendation.

Chairman Robertson added if they felt like getting his recommendation.

Mr. Rollins repeated, "if you feel like it" and the chairman stated yes. You don't have....

Mr. Rollins stated that the taxpayers voted him in because they felt that he could do the job and he kind of feels as though maybe you guys don't think so but he was sorry that they felt that way but he was sorry that all this COVID stuff is going on and it has been kind of a screwed up season and everything has been very behind, very hard to have meetings but he thought that they were doing a pretty good job. Yes, they are a little behind.

Selectman Dill stated the thing about the time card, what about the time card that they gave you Steve. There is no detail whatsoever. There is two lines and you signed it.

Mr. Rollins stated that he filled it out just like Mark did.

Selectman Dill stated that they asked him to give them ...

Mr. Rollins stated, okay, but he is here, on call, 24/7, I'm not here from 9 to 5. This is not a 9 to 5 job.

Selectman Dill continued, so, how do you know?

Mr. Rollins stated that you just asked me what was done today and he told them. You told me which way the machine was driving on the road and he stated that it wasn't. He knew that it was going the opposite way. He must be there, correct?

Selectman Dill stated, not necessarily, no. If you had any other employee pass in a time card with two lines and a signature, he didn't think it would fly with him. They don't know what job you were working on; they don't know what they are doing next week (couldn't understand). They don't know if he is working, we just know that the town is paying a check. That is all that they are finding out and if he is going to tell him that that is better for the taxpayer, he is going to really question that.

Mr. Rollins stated that he has gotten a lot of compliments when he is out on the road working with the guys so he guessed in three years when they vote for him in again, he meant

Selectman McGarry stated that they are specifically asking for detail on the time sheet and two lines is not detail.

Mr. Rollins stated that he has had several people tell me and Selectman McGarry interrupted him and stated that they were dealing with time sheets.

Selectman McGarry stated that they wanted detail on the time sheet. If you are working Saturdays and Sundays, put that down on the time sheet (couldn't understand).

Mr. Rollins stated that there is a line there that states that he is on call all day.

Selectman McGarry stated he wanted detail on the timesheet! That is what they wanted.

Chairman Robertson stated that he is on call of the days but they are getting messages from the police department saying, "where's the road agent?"

Mr. Rollins stated that he called from number that he didn't know, sorry.

Chairman Robertson answered ya.

Mr. Rollins stated that when Matt Fisher called him, his number showed up and he answered that one but at that time he was already (couldn't understand) calling about a tree on the powerlines of which he couldn't do anything to which the chairman replied, right.

Mr. Rollins continued that from there, he headed up to Meetinghouse Hill, removed one, off the lines because he knew that they were dead and (couldn't understand).

(Couldn't understand).

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he thought that the sad thing was that they were getting questions from tax payers saying that he was not around. They are not convinced that he was earning his keep. It makes it really awkward for them. They didn't need those calls. He didn't need any.

Mr. Rollins stated that he is hearing the opposite from the tax payers so,

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that they wouldn't be having this meeting. They don't make this up. They are trying to come up with a solution and will go back to my original point and that is he didn't know how he could run the pit and do this with all that is going on. That is a question that he gets questioned weekly.

Mr. Rollins stated that he isn't having a problem with it. His guys get what to do and they take care of it.

Chairman Robertson stated that he thought that there was a problem Steve and that is why we are here. There is certainly not a problem with you having the pit and having your guys take care of it but there is a problem if the Board and a number of other folks have the general sense that you are not here, that you are not here everyday with the crew and Mr. Rollins added that he was.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he was told today and he would be right up front with him, that you taking a check with what you are doing is called theft by deception and he is not accusing him of that but that is what he heard today.

Mr. Rollins stated that he was sorry that somebody feels that way.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he makes it awkward for them.

Selectman Dill stated that the other problem is the storm and John has a copy of the email that he got from the police chief who was very upset that no one could get in touch with the road agent during the storm and the officer called and Rockingham dispatch called to which Mr. Rollins asked, called him and Selectman Dill stated, yes, called you, multiple times.

Mr. Rollins stated that he had one phone number and he could show them his records. He had one phone number that called him two times and it was a number he did not know until Matt Fisher called him and at that point, he was already on the road, and the reason he called him is that he met him on the road.

But like he said, he brushed off all the roads until 10:00 that night. It was piled up. There was nothing big. There was a pine tree over on Nottingham Road that he wasn't sure who cut it up, it was already cut up when he got there.

Selectman Dill continued, well, according to the police chief, that was the fire crew because they couldn't make contact with him so they sent the fire department out to clear the road.

Chairman Robertson stated that apparently after, the fire department called Mr. Rollins after they had started.

(Couldn't understand), Mr. Rollin stated that he thought that he went out around 6 something (couldn't understand).

Chairman Robertson asked for further questions or discussion.

Selectman Dill stated that Selectwoman McHugh might have something to which she didn't.

Chairman Robertson asked what the Board's pleasure was at this point?

Selectman Dill asked the chairman what their options were?

Chairman Robertson started, well, they can again, express their displeasure with the road agent and tell him that they would like a punch list of projects, they would like detailed time cards and they don't want to see any more equipment rented whether it is discounted or not, until they had a written agreement with Deerfield Sand and Gravel to rent their equipment; they could tell Steve that they are disappointed enough that they want to remove him as road agent; those are basically your two options or they could tell him that he is doing a great job.

Mr. Rollins stated that he understood that they got a slow start, given everything that is going on this year and like he said, they are playing catch up.

As far as ... and the chairman interrupted to say that they don't even know what he is playing catch up on Steve! We really don't.

They don't have a list of projects. He asked him about the list of projects and was told that he hadn't gotten the go forward on Candia Road!

(couldn't understand Mr. Rollins) projects are.

Chairman Robertson remarked that you told us that you were trimming brush and doing some ditching.

Mr. Rollins stated that they have been rolling roads.

Chairman Robertson asked which ones, how many projects do they have and you have more than two projects, do we just have the two projects?

Mr. Rollins stated that he was at the meetings. We have already been through this. Fred has been talking to my paving crew more than I have. They know more of what is going on by talking to Fred than he does. You know, so he is kind of, you know, ...

Chairman Robertson stated that they had two projects, Candia Road and Middle Road apparently.

(Couldn't understand comments, people talking over each other).

Mr. Rollins stated that this was stuff that Mark had had planned last year and they have gone ahead and with this extra money, we had talked about in a meeting, was to fix the roads. They drove the roads. Fred was there with the town engineer about how to fix them so he assumed that they were all good to go so you guys know what the projects are. He is sorry that Fred is not relaying the information to you.

Chairman Robertson stated that "now Fred is relaying information to us".

Mr. Rollins stated "how can you tell me that you don't know what is going on?"

Chairman Robertson stated that he just didn't know if there was anything else going on besides those paving projects which are off to a relatively slow start.

Mr. Rollin stated that (couldn't understand) because they don't know what is under the roads so he is fixing them the best he can with the money we have and he is doing it as cheap as possible but he also wants this top to last.

Chairman Robertson stated that they did too.

Mr. Rollins didn't know how much money he would have because he didn't know how much he would be tearing up and how much he is going to be able to base because he got the base (couldn't understand) after tearing up, then he will know how much is left of the paving money or extra money, whichever.

So, he needs to The chairman interrupted him.

He stated that he has been on the Board for a long time and has had a general idea of the ditching schedule for roads, he has had a general idea for gravel, that sort of thing, pretty much what was going on particularly during the summer for the highway department.

He obviously, is well aware of what they are intending on spending on paving but there has got to be other projects, other things going on, other things scheduled with the highway department.

That is why they ask for a punch list of what he was planning on doing. Never got a punch list. It helps them. The very first meeting that he had with John and I, he said is that the thing that they really needed to maintain is good, strong communication between you and the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Rollins stated that the Board hasn't reached out to talk to him either so, other than the meeting when I come in here and you guys are

Chairman Robertson stated that this is how they typically reach out to the road agent. If he has questions or they ask him to do something, they expect him to come....

Mr. Rollins stated that when he had the time, he was checking with John quite (couldn't understand) and he was sorry that he got busy working with the guys.

Selectman Dill stated that he drove around a lot Steve and he has stopped and talked to the guys quite a few times, probably seven or eight, ten times. He said that he saw him once in ten visits over the course of a month. So, it is not just here, its other places that they are trying to reach out to you.

Mr. Rollin stated that he has driven by Selectman Dill's house several times. Did that tree at the top of the hill and delivered all the fire wood to your neighbor, oh wait, it was on my time, with my equipment and he did not charge the town for it, just so you know.

Selectman McGarry asked how could he explain the fact that Alden has only seen you only once or twice and Selectman Dill stated that obviously, he was working at night.

Chairman Robertson stated that Selectwoman McHugh stated that she wanted to make a comment.

Selectwoman McHugh asked how he kept track of the guys. The fourth of July week, there was nobody working, everybody had vacation so that the highway department shut down fourth of July week?

Mr. Rollins stated that he was still there. He worked. He did some trees and that kind of stuff.

Chairman Robertson stated that the other concern that they have is that, and he will tell him straight out as an insurance guy, you, working alone, at night, dropping old trees and that sort of thing, is a, is still a safety concern for them and he is on the town's worker's comp policy.

We need to work with the crew, regular schedule, obviously, there is going to be some extra time when he will need to call the crew out probably too, and not the fire department. There are some real safety concerns about you operating completely on your own in the off hours. There are.

Selectwoman McHugh stated also using people that aren't on our payroll.

Mr. Rollins, stated excuse me?

Chairman Robertson stated that Selectwoman McHugh stated using people that aren't on our payroll.

The chairman continued that if he was using people from your business to which Mr. Rollins stated that he hired the machine with an operator. That is normal.

Chairman Robertson acknowledged him.

He continued that he knew on Harvey Road you were explaining that he had hired the machine with an operator but then he had operated and he had substituted one of his employees as a flagger to which Mr. Rollins agreed and the chairman continued that which isn't kosher either. If your employee gets hit directing traffic, whose worker's comp does that go on. Whose libel.

Couldn't understand what Mr. Rollins remarked.

Chairman Robertson stated that the employee was working for the town without a contract.

Mr. Rollins stated that he brings in an operator and

Chairman Robertson stated that he said that he did last time and Mr. Rollins remarked that he did and that he did the next time also so he did exactly what you wanted.

Vice Chairman Pitman continued and said that what he was saying Steve, so he could get back to a couple of people, that you came to the town shed at 6:30 in the morning and that he has been staying until 4 in the afternoon or with the crew on site without having to run to the pit four days a week?

Mr. Rollins stated that it was correct but that isn't what I am suppose to do. He also has to have some hours left over for calls and stuff like that, driveway permits, talking to the people that have problems with the drainage work, culverts or whatever, right?

He is not supposed to be working with the crew every minute. He has to come down there to do payroll. He has to do driveway permits, look at street signs, make lists of street signs, order street signs, pick up street signs. We have had a lot of vandalism with signs as John can tell you this year.

A lot of stop signs have been spray painted. A lot of speed limit signs have been painted. He can't take the whole crew with him to hang speed limit signs.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he didn't have a vote in it but it was brought to his attention and everybody knows that he is involved with the fair but he does not have a vote on any contracts or things like that.

You just started a new job down to the fair?

Mr. Rollins stated that they are going to be starting it so the vice chairman asked if that going to need his attention?

Mr. Rollins stated that he has a crew that can more than handle that job.

Chairman Robertson stated that he thought that Steve had heard their concerns. I still am personally, and he couldn't speak for the Board, he is not feeling all that comfortable with the conversation this evening. He didn't know how the rest of the members felt.

He is in much of the same boat as Alden is, he is around town a lot and he sees the crew a lot and Mr. Rollins stated that he meets him on the road a lot and he is not on Route 107/43, any of those roads when he meets him but apparently he doesn't see Mr. Rollins.

Chairman Robertson stated, nope he sees him on occasion.

Mr. Rollins remarked, on occasion?

Vice Chairman Pitman asked Mr. Rollins if he wanted this job to which he stated that he did.

He did want this job. He wants to

Chairman Robertson interjected and stated that it sums up exactly what the individual members of this board are thinking, is this something that you want to do to which Mr. Rollins stated yes. Yes, it is definitely something that he wants to do but not for the reasons that you folks think so.

Mr. Rollins gets the feeling that he is just trying to line his pockets when it is just entirely the opposite.

He, very well, could have rented his compactor to the town for the last three weeks at \$180.00 a week because that is what costs anywhere. You can call ATS but that wasn't even a question in his mind. The question in his mind was, geez, how come nobody is putting in culverts and not compacting them.

Selectman Dill spoke and stated that he thought that the town owned a compactor.

Mr. Rollins stated that yes, they do but it stopped running five years ago.

Selectwoman McHugh stated that she was told that it was running.

Mr. Rollins stated that he was told it was not running for the last five years by his crew. He now has it at his shop and he is going to have a friend of his fix it at zero dollars to the town.

Chairman Robertson spoke and said Steve, they are not asking you to donate your equipment for free. They would really like to see is a written agreement between him and the Board for equipment rental.

Mr. Rollins stated that he is trying to get as much done with as little money. The roads need a lot of work. They have a lot of brush and tree work. A lot of dead trees. The ash bug has just destroyed the ash trees in town and ash don't last long dead.

Chairman Robertson stated that he would agree with that.

Mr. Rollins continued, and that is going to be a big problem and he doesn't want to see someone walking down the side of the road and have an ash tree land on them.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he thought one of his biggest things, and he stated that Mr. Rollins stated it at least three times, "that is what Mark did". He didn't think that was what he really ought to be going by.

Mr. Rollins stated that the time card is the only thing that he stated that he said, that is what Mark did, was the time card and his hourly rate.

So, with the hourly rate for the equipment, he will sub his, because his equipment is compatible with mine.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he mentioned about time spent.

Mr. Rollins stated that he didn't mention anything about how many hours he worked in a day. He mentioned what he did with his time card. He stated that he was sorry that he heard that but that is not what he said.

Chairman Robertson asked the Board how they wanted to proceed from here?

Selectman McGarry stated that he would certainly want to see all the requested information that the Board has asked for to be provided in a reasonable time period. Let's set a time frame on it because he has had plenty of time to work on it Steve.

Mr. Rollins stated that he thought he had answered that question, what my work plan is.

Selectman McGarry stated, more than that.

Chairman Robertson stated that they wanted some detail on the time cards as to when you were working and particularly if you are working Friday's and nights and weekends. Put that on the time card and tell them what he was doing. That is what they want to know.

They can't respond to people when they say, hey, I haven't seen Steve with the crew for a couple of days. What's going on. I can't tell them that he is working Saturday nights and Friday nights cutting trees after work. He has no idea nor can these people.

Selectwoman McHugh stated that she thought that this had to stop. Steve shouldn't be working nights and weekends by himself.

Chairman Robertson stated that if it isn't an emergency.

Mr. Rollins stated that their bucket, they have a guy with a bucket truck that is cutting trees for them that is only available on nights and weekends.

Chairman Robertson asked if they had a

Mr. Rollins stated that he tried Asplundh, he tried all these places. They are not available. He has called for a price and they don't get back to him with a price. They are just, we are just small potatoes.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that this, again, just hearing, we have been here 40 minutes and just came up about a bucket truck that they knew nothing about.

Chairman Robertson asked who were they getting the bucket truck from, who is paying that?

Mr. Rollins stated Corey, but John knows about it. He, used the for the tree that hit the excavator, correct so it is not like he is not reporting to anybody. He is reporting to the town manager.

Anytime he does anything that is reportable, he checks in. You guys are not here so I'm checking in with John.

Am I doing that wrong? Is that not what I am supposed to be doing?

Chairman Robertson stated, no, obviously John is their liaison for sure.

Mr. Rollins stated so, he knows.

Chairman Robertson stated that Mr. Rollins gave an example of one tree on Griffin Road involving Glenn Young's dump truck and then you mentioned that you have a guy and a bucket truck working after hours.

Mr. Rollins stated that was correct. That was scheduled.

Chairman Robertson asked if that was the only tree that they worked on.

Mr. Rollins stated that tree and now he is doing a little on Candia Road. Topping the trees so that the ones that are going to hit the wires that Carl can't cut, obviously have to be tall.

Chairman Robertson stated so, if he is working after hours, what do you have for safety protocol in place. Does he have a flagger, to which Mr. Rollins stated that he had him.

Selectman Dill asked if they had a certificate of insurance on him and then directed the question to the town administrator.

Mr. Harrington asked if he knew who the vendor was?

Mr. Rollins stated that he didn't know if he could pronounce Corey's last name but ...

Vice Chairman Pitman asked if he has gotten a check yet to which Mr. Rollins stated no.

Chairman Robertson added that they haven't paid him anything.

Mr. Rollins stated that there were invoices that he was going to turn in this week and that is for the tree on Griffin Road.

Selectman Dill stated so, we don't have a certificate of insurance, we don't know whose working.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he got done one job and has started a second.

Selectwoman McHugh asked Mr. Rollins if they had his insurance binders for his equipment to which he answered that they did and he will get Corey insurance and his certificate on file.

Chairman Robertson stated, good because Pete can't release a check if he doesn't have his certificate.

So, Selectman McGarry asked what the other items that he had specifically and the chairman stated that they started basic and said that they expected him to be working 80 hours per pay period, they wanted him to keep a record of his

hours and turn it in with your employee time sheets. An example of what is expected on your time sheet each working day, time you report to work, time you leave for break, time you return from break, time you end your shift for the day and the projects that you might be working on.

They expect that he will provide his employees with clear and sufficient plans of work on a daily basis at the beginning of every scheduled work day.

They expect him to be site in a supervisory and supportive role at all projects. If needed, he should be prepared to actively participate in any highway project if the project requires the help.

They expect to see a list of summer maintenance and construction projects and the roads that they are being conducted on within five working days from the date of this letter which was June 29th.

Selectman McGarry (couldn't understand) list of equipment and rates... chairman interrupted to say that they had previous to that, they had mentioned that they didn't want him to rent his own equipment until they had a formal agreement in place. As mentioned, with the prior road agent, when they used his equipment, they had a written agreement with us.

Mr. Rollins stated he sat with Pete and Pete went through bills with Mark and who took basically, \$10.00 an hour off his hourly rate (couldn't understand) and so that is what they did.

Chairman Robertson stated that he thought their concern was that they had a specific agreement with Mark about how they would handle that.

Mr. Rollins asked, so did they want to set that agreement right now so that they have it on record, that they would take \$10.00 off his rate to which the chairman stated no.

Chairman Robertson stated that if he wanted to say that, what they really wanted is a written agreement similar to the one, and he believed John gave him a copy of the one that we had with the prior road agent.

Mr. Rollins stated that he didn't get that.

Mr. Harrington stated that he did send it to him.

Chairman Robertson added that this was after their June 1st meeting.

Chairman Robertson asked what was the Board's pleasure?

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he just wanted to be convinced that he wants this job Steve because everything so far has been negative feedback.

Mr. Rollins stated (couldn't understand)

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that they wouldn't be having this meeting tonight.

Mr. Rollins stated that it has been just the opposite on his end so he didn't know how to please the people that are talking to you. Obviously, he is not meeting them on the roads that he is on at the time that they are on them. He is there.

Like he said, the storm, he had all the brush off the road by 10:00. There was no brush left on the road.

Chairman Robertson stated that it was great that he got the brush off the road but they need to get a protocol set up and when you have a storm like that coming in, to work with your crew ahead of time, you need to think about calling out your crew so that you aren't cleaning brush by yourself. You need to think about that so that they aren't involving the fire department whose normally not responsible for cleaning brush off the road.

The things that you are saying Steve, it is wonderful that you went out and picked up brush but that is not exactly what they want the highway agent to do.

Mr. Rollins stated that he talked with his crew before they went home that night. They knew that a storm was coming and they said to give a call if he needed them.

That is how it was left. So, they had a plan. The plan was to wait to see what the weather does because as you know, we live in New England, we don't know what is going to happen and when it happened, he went out and took a quick ride around to see how bad it was, see if he needed to call them in.

At 10:00, he had none, he didn't need to call them in. There was no sense in paying overtime for something that wasn't necessary.

Selectwoman McHugh spoke to Steve and stated that he had had a talk with the crew about the storm to which he answered yes.

Mr. Rollins stated that they all talked at the end of the day about if this was going to be dud or what was going to happen. Call me if you need me.

Selectwoman McHugh stated that she was under the impression that they didn't have any instructions and the chairman stated that he was under that impression as well.

Mr. Rollins stated because they didn't know what it was going to do. He said that his crew stated to call them if they need them and that is what he said that he would do. He didn't know how bad the storm was going to be. He couldn't say, meet me at 8:30. It doesn't work that way with a storm. He didn't know what more of a plan you want other than yes, they know that they are going to be on call. They are going to be ready if he needs them.

Selectwoman McHugh stated that she missed the part as to why dispatch couldn't get in touch with you. Did they have the wrong number?

Mr. Rollins stated that there were two phone calls from a phone number that is, most of the officers he has in his phone. Obviously, it was the new guy and also his phone was on the charger.

Knowing that it was going to be a long night, he plugged it in and went into his room with the charger is and checked it every so often. He missed two calls and obviously, he now knows who they were. Tried calling it back, no one answered.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked if he thought if there was anyway possible that this pavement can get done before cold weather to which Mr. Rollins answered yes.

The vice chairman continued, because like today, if someone doesn't show up, how do you regroup the crew.

Mr. Rollins stated that they did some of their checklist stuff like he has stated and the vice chairman continued to stated that this doesn't get them ready for paving and Mr. Rollins stated that it doesn't but in getting ready for paving, he has to have a certain number of days set aside to check this stuff.

Again, working on the road every single day, washboards happen, freak rain storms happen, trees fall down so he has to have allowed time for that. If he doesn't, what happens when it does?

Selectman Dill stated that he didn't think much was going to change after this meeting.

Mr. Rollins stated that he would get in the hourly rate for his equipment. As for the time thing goes, he didn't, he meant, he could write everything down, a lot of stuff on the thing, but it has never been done before with any other road agent.

Selectman Dill stated that it was asked for a month ago.

And it has never been done before stated Mr. Rollins so why is it being asked for now?

Chairman Robertson stated that several of them made it very clear that it is being asked for now because they are not seeing you with the crew on a regular basis and they are getting complaints from the general public. This is why...

Mr. Rollins stated that he was on Middle Road when you came driving by and you turned around and went the other way.

Chairman Robertson stated that he did and he saw him and that afternoon he came back.

Mr. Rollins stated that there was another time that he saw him, right?

Chairman Robertson stated that was one day and he saw him on Thursday.

Mr. Rollins stated that he has been there for three weeks.

Chairman Robertson stated for three weeks, you have been there every day to which Mr. Rollins stated yes.

He didn't say that he was there every minute but he was there every day.

Chairman Robertson remarked okay. He did see you that day on Middle Road.

Mr. Rollins stated and that doesn't count the nights over when we had the walks, you know, and standing in the rain, that isn't counting any of that.

That isn't counting meeting with the people over there that, you know, had questions and he is still getting phone calls from people hoping they would be going further than they are.

In fact, he got a call today, a call back, people saying, why did you stop, keep going.

Mr. Rollins (couldn't understand) about that another day.

Selectman Dill stated that he hasn't been a selectman here for very long. He was a selectman for two terms in Northwood and was on fairly good terms with the road agent and so he didn't know how that law sits.

It is an elected position but could you inform me how the Board of Selectmen fits over that?

Chairman Robertson stated that it is 231:65 and the road agent is an elected position in this town but the RSA stipulates that the road agent is under direct supervision of the Board of Selectmen and can be removed if he fails to meet with the demands and requirements that the Board of Selectmen, particularly with regard to written instruction.

Sounds to him like they are not at that stage yet but if there is not a motion forthcoming, he would tell you Steve, the Board is seriously concerned and if something isn't done tonight, to change the perimeter and where you are going, that is their option.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he thought that they were at the point, and he will be brave, and basically putting on notice. Things have got to improve. He wanted his phone to stop ringing on those complaints.

Selectman Dill stated that they are halfway through August or approaching that.

Mr. Rollins stated that he still doesn't have permission to proceed with Candia Road, does he or not?

Chairman Robertson asked Mr. Rollins what he meant by permission to proceed?

Mr. Rollins stated that he didn't know. There was a meeting...

Chairman Robertson stated that they had the walks, identified the trees, they were going to move forward. He had explained to the Board and to the people that took the time to listen in on the phone call about the excavation.

Mr. Rollins stated, so we are good.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that after the letter that they got about the trees; he didn't know how good they were.

Mr. Rollins stated, there you go.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that it was his actions, to be responsible for your men.

Mr. Rollins stated that he is taking down the trees that he was told by the Board, that had to go.

Carl is taking down any brush that is below the size which his caliper says he has to take or can take so that is what he is doing.

He is not cutting anything that is not marked that is oversized.

Selectman Dill stated that the letter said at least three, unmarked trees of fifteen feet in diameter, multiple corrections to fifteen inches.

Now, he hasn't been to Candia Road yet today.

Mr. Rollins stated that it is actually measured, according to what Carl told him, measured at chest height, to which Selectman Dill added that it is fifteen inches at chest height and Mr. Rollins agreed.

Selectman Dill continued that the concern that three unmarked trees above fifteen inches at chest height, had been cut.

Mr. Rollins stated that not the saw that he is working with. Nothing that has been marked at that size has been cut.

Selectman McGarry stated that it was fifteen inches in circumference and Selectman Dill added, in diameter is what the letter to the Board said.

Mr. Rollins stated that nothing fifteen inches, but first of all, he didn't think fifteen inches has been cut yet but if it is nothing, none of the line trees have come down yet or are going to.

Chairman Robertson stated that if that is where we are at, did they want to put a time frame on this but and the vice chairman stated that no, he didn't want a false, either he works or he doesn't.

Chairman Robertson stated that he guessed that he would end with that Steve. The Board is seriously concerned about the perception, and how quickly they are moving on things and the storm was sort of the cherry on top of recent concerns.

He would take it upon himself to reach out to Rockingham County Dispatch and the police department to make sure that they have your cell phone and you so that you recognize their number when they call you. It is going to be particularly important especially if they have any more hurricanes, storms, particular when they get into the winter.

Mr. Rollins stated again, that he put his phone on the charger that night to make sure that it was good to go for the night and (couldn't understand) but it was a number that he didn't recognize. That was only two calls.

Selectman Dill stated that the duty officer called you once at 6:00 and Rockingham County Dispatch called him twice.

Mr. Rollins stated that it was the same phone number. It was one phone number.

Chairman Robertson stated that there may well be some question because Rockingham County Dispatch also called Mark Young so it is conceivable that they hadn't changed the number out.

Mr. Rollins stated that it looks like they call Mark and not him.

Chairman Robertson stated that he thought Steve understood where they were at and what they are thinking and he will go back to the June 1st meeting they had. Communication needs to be better. Come see them. Not individually, come to their meetings if he has concerns, if he thought things were not right.

Email John. Others agreed.

Mr. Rollins stated that he would love to come to meetings to they don't have meetings in person.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that everyone else gets to John to them. That is the right way.

Mr. Rollins remarked that he does check in with John regularly and he is hoping that he tells the Board so and he goes to him to ask him what he needs from him, if there is anything, basically from you guys with changing the "No Parking" signs which he has done three times this year or what it is.

So, Mr. Rollins checks in and John texts him quite frequently whenever he needs him and he always gets back to him so he thought that John and he have a pretty good working relationship.

Chairman Robertson stated, as he has said, Mr. Rollins has heard what the Board has said about and where they stand and he didn't mean to sound like a preachy dad here but there will be consequences if this doesn't straighten up. He stated that they just couldn't continue in the same fashion that they are.

Lay it out to you.

The chairman stated that if there was nothing more to say about that, let's talk about the excavator that showed up today.

Mr. Rollins stated which is what he thought was the reason he was there.

So, he was hoping that possibly, that the town would entertain the rental, purchase, or something, he didn't know what was available, he didn't know what was available and if there is some money available like when Mark bought the backhoe, it wasn't like they had a vote on it. He used impact fee money and if the town had some impact fee money, he was hoping the town could put that down on this piece and do the rent to own for the balance. He didn't know.

Chairman Robertson stated that this is the kind of thing that they like to discuss before it gets delivered.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked what the list price was on it.

Mr. Rollins stated that it was \$88,000.00 which is a steal for a piece of equipment and it is and actually, you know that. He stated that he is a bargain shopper when it comes to equipment.

Selectman Dill stated that they wanted the town to know about it. When we buy a fire truck, we know. When we buy a dump truck, we know. \$88,000.00 is a pretty big purchase to just say, why wait and it shows up at the garage.

Mr. Rollins stated that the town didn't buy anything. Nobody has signed a piece of paper. He picked it up on his own time, with my own truck, brought it up here and he is letting Paul play with it today. They have a big project coming up where they are going to need to rent something. You obviously don't want to rent his, so, this is rubber-tired, we are leaving the pavement that they are patching spots so lets get something with rubber tires, where they aren't going to destroy the rest of the road that they are trying to leave and if he is going to rent something, he will have to rent something like this.

But he was interested to see if the Board would be interested in purchasing it. If they do a rental, the first thirty-day rental is 100 percent towards the purchase if you even want to do that.

But it gives them some time to think about if they wanted to entertain the idea. If they didn't, it is just a simple rental like renting anything from Mark, Glenn and himself, ATS, anyone like that which they have to do. You can't rebuild a road with the backhoe.

No, but on Pleasant Hill, went really well when Glenn Young ran his own excavator and was very capable of doing what needed to be done. They have had numerous complements on that road and that was done with an excavator and Steve stated that it was an excavator.

Chairman Robertson stated that he didn't see the Board being able to authorize a "rent to purchase" or a "lease to purchase" for that kind of equipment, Steve.

The vice chairman remarked, not at all.

Chairman Robertson stated that it was never mentioned in the budget, never talked about it.

Mr. Rollins stated that the backhoe wasn't in the budget. Right?

Chairman Robertson stated that he actually didn't recall what was going on with the backhoe but he knew for this...

Mr. Rollins stated that he was hoping maybe since this was a good deal and he thought that maybe the town would be interested in saving money over the next ten years verses giving away to rental but that's okay, we rent, he didn't care, but he did actually.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that since he was talking about equipment, why was \$3,400.00 spent on repairs to the 550? He heard that it hadn't been done since Mark left.

Mr. Rollins stated that it hadn't. It was due for an oil change. He made an appointment. This was the first appointment that he could get with all the virus stuff and everything. It needed back brakes, it had a broken axle in the front, it had a bad fuel pump. That is what it needed and the only reason he took it to Ford is because that is where it always went. He tried to get the electric fuel pump under warranty but on time, they were over, mileage, they were under but time, they were over.

He would strongly suggest not to take it back to Ford.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he didn't know, if they found those problems, you had employees riding around in a truck with a broken axle. He didn't think that was very bright.

Mr. Rollins stated that it was a U-joint. It just means that the 4-wheel drive doesn't work.

Chairman Robertson stated that he thought that they were clear on a couple of things.

1. The improvement in how the department is operated.
2. They are not interested in a lease/purchase at this point.

If it is something that you want to bring forward in the budget, it is something that they could consider in a few months in the fall. At this stage of the game, the Board can't.

Selectwoman McHugh stated that she thought that the backhoe was bought with a grant that they got from the state.

Chairman Robertson stated that he couldn't remember the specifics but he had some inkling of that but don't recall.

Chairman Robertson continued, if the Board is done, he guessed at this point, he thanked Steve for his time being there and answering questions and he would look for Citizen's Comments.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he would like to go into non-public

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A3, II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion: Chairman Robertson again thanked Mr. Rollins and stated that they were going into non-public session and he didn't know if there would be any action taken but there is always a possibility.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman Robertson stated that they came out of non-public session at about 6:45 pm.

He would note for the record, no action was taken and would look for a vote to seal the minutes

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to seal the minutes of the non-public session

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

At this point, he would take Citizen's Comments

Citizen's Comments:

Ms. Cady – Old Centre Road

Listening to this, she was going to make the comment that she feels that these meetings are compliant with Right to Know.

Three quarters of the time, she couldn't hear Alden, whatever he was saying. Once in a while, she heard Fred clearly and then she would hear maybe talking but not near the mic or whatever you are using for a microphone to take into this meeting.

Whatever they were doing, they have to somehow, make sure that the public can hear. Somehow, it needs to be done.

Secondly, when she worked for the State of NH, she had a “d” calendar so that each day she could write down the work that she had done and at the end of the week, she could put it on her time sheet and she was wondering if that has been given to Steve as a tool for him working?

How much he has had in instruction to what is to be done in his job, she has no idea.

She did know that Mark had a contract with the town for his equipment to be used and she thought that it was an excellent idea and perhaps that contract example should be given to Steve to show him that is what they expect before he uses his equipment.

She also could not hear Steve well. She didn't know what kind of phone or mic he was using but it is not working to comply with Right to Know.

Chairman Robertson stated that they appreciated her comments and would see what they could do to remedy this.

Chairman Robertson asked for other Citizen's Comments.

Errol Rhodes

So, he would agree with the prior speaker that initially, it was hard to hear but he does know that he sent a little text message to Mr. Harrington and that brought Mr. Rollins closer to the mic.

He had no problem hearing anybody else on the conversation.

He wanted to say that.

The other thought was, he liked Mrs. Cady's suggestion of a notebook. He was sure that the Board has given Mr. Rollins instruction on what he needs to do but the reality is that it feels like he likes to do things verbally and this is just not a verbal kind of position.

That is a position that requires discipline, documentation, transparency. Speaking of Right to Know, its right down 91-A that says that they ought to know exactly what he is doing, how his time is being spent and this requires documentation and clarity.

It's frustrating to hear that it doesn't seem to want to happen.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that this isn't an \$80,000.00 kindergarten, Errol to which he remarked no, or an \$88,000.00 tonka toy. That kind of stuff requires planning and again, transparency. You can't just bring it up and say, “Hey, how about this thing that I managed”. It just requires discipline and it requires documentation and he is certainly supportive of that in our process here.

Chairman Robertson and Vice Chairman Pitman thanked Mr. Rhodes for his comments.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to adjourn at 7:00 pm

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Next Meeting: Monday, August 17, 2020 at 5:30 pm

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Dianne L. Kimball, Recording Secretary
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*