

# WASHINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 17, 2016

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

In Attendance: Kent Lew, Dick Spencer, and David Weissbrod

## OLD BUSINESS

1. Finance committee meeting minutes from the September 12, 2016 meeting were approved as amended.

## NEW BUSINESS

1. Highway Dept. – StreetScan update, Winter Roads outlook, PolarFlex cutting blade request, vehicle capital planning

(Highway superintendent Tom Johnson joined us for this discussion.)

Kent opened discussion, stating that overall the Highway Dept is on track, on budget, for the most part.

### A. StreetScan

Its basic service takes video(s) of paved roads and provides a paper report of road/pavement status, importantly providing crack density information.

The StreetScan service could use Chap. 90 money. Numerous options are available at additional costs. Basic service costs \$7,045 upfront, with a \$975 annual data storage/maintenance fee. Tom is going to look into whether a grant might be available to offset some of that annual fee. This price includes a 35% discount because of the town's low operations budget. The StreetScan service allows for inclusion of road upgrades. More options at an additional \$1,975.00 would allow for inclusion of location of road signs and markers, etc. We could update service options later if desired. Kathy Stevens, our Chap 90 contact, stated that this service or a similar service could help a town justify a request for Chap. 90 funding, influencing the state's decision to fund one project over another.

The deadline for a decision on this service is undefined at this point. For now, we will investigate it further and check to see what other local towns plan to do. No final decision needed at this time.

### B. PolarFlex blades

PolarFlex Blades could be used on town's plows, replacing existing plow blades. In addition to actual plowing and maintenance advantages, switching to these blades could save us money. The blades can be replaced in 1-foot

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## B. PolarFlex blades (Continued)

segments (\$110.00 per foot). Tom said that Becket has been using these blades for 2 years and speaks highly of them. Becket hasn't needed to replace blades over that time. We presently replace our blades once or twice a year. We feel we could realize modest annual savings over time and agreed to a trial installation on one plow truck starting this winter. The first trial installation, for the 7800 truck, will require two 11' edges, and would cost around \$5,280 this year. We can put PolarFlex blades on a second truck next winter if all goes well. This will allow us to space out original payments and replacement payments, as well as allow us time to evaluate them without too much initial investment this FY.

## C. Winter Roads Outlook

(1) One member of the town crew is still without CDL, so is limited to using the 550 plow truck, which is NOT in very good condition. How much more money do we want to pour into it? Would we perform a major fix on it, if needed? For example, 55K for a new chassis. Another 550 truck could cost \$113K. Tom said we could count on only 4 to 5 years of usage from a 550 before running into trouble. Tom said there is another option just within the CDL requirements but you start running into interchangeability issues.

(2) Tom said the crew is lacking a reliable "general" vehicle, as they are wearing out the F550 Ford truck. In fact, Tom estimates there is a 70% chance that the truck won't make it through the winter. He stated that he was using his own truck a lot during work. We encouraged him to submit his mileage count for reimbursement but all agreed we needed to look into other options. Tom said a Silverado would cost around \$55,000. A half-ton truck would run around \$44,000. And how would we pay for a truck? Would it come out of stabilization?

We will continue to research and discuss options for these highway capital planning needs.

We thanked Tom for joining us and discussing all these issues with us.

## 2. Audit Preparation Update -Policies & Procedures Manual, Procurement Standards

Kent said he reviewed the results from the town's last audit of 2008.

- A. Our Town Policies & Procedures Manual needs updating. We should review and address audit comments, and advised us to look at the Policies & Procedures Manuals from other communities, in addition to looking at the Commonwealth's boilerplate information.

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B. Procurement Standards and Processes are needed to define and instruct all town departments. Kent would like this done this FY. Do we need a Procurement Officer? We need to review how we do procurement in town and identify any areas that should be improved to insure compliance, especially in light of any changes from the recent Municipal Modernization Act. In the meantime Dick will see if he can find guidelines related to the position of Procurement Officer.

### 3. Last-Mile Fiber Update

Steve Nelson and Kent met with Todd Corcoran, Technical Program Manager at MBI. Our town has achieved Readiness Status. We are on target for pole surveying starting the week after Thanksgiving. It may only take 3 weeks. MBI may put out construction for bid. AXIA seems to have stirred the pot, at one time expressing interest in providing complete construction in our area. Then, it backed off... MBI is going to get all the other competitors together. Perhaps MBI will oversee one of them. So we may have to wait for MBI and a Private Company to work something out.

Right now, Ashfield is first in line... Washington is a close fifth in line.

### 4. Any New/Old Business

A. Dick said he plans to get an estimate for reworking the Town Park, Storage Facility and Garage to lower our costs. He'll report back when he gets the electrician's estimate.

B. Dave said that he received a message from Bill Cawley regarding the \$7,000 carry-over for transfer station DEP compliance. Bill said it had to do with a DEP requirement for putting up a gate around the Transfer Station area. It appears that the gate was put up, and the Finance Committee will drop the \$7,000.

C. Dave said that Jodi has fixed the Finance Committee Minutes posted at the town Website, so they now appear "in all their glory" (Dave's wording).

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully,

David Weissbrod, Clerk