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Town of Plaistow - Highway Safety Advisory Committee
145 Main Street, Plaistow, NH 03865

PLAISTOW HIGHWAY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

MEETING DATE – Friday, December 15, 2017

PRESENT – Police Chief Kathleen Jones, *Chairman*; Fire Chief John McArdle, *Vice-Chairman*; Dan Garlington, *Highway Department Supervisor*; John Sherman, *Selectmen Representative*; Arthur Wiggin, *Citizen's Representative*; Lisa Withee, *Citizen's Representative*; and Sam Cafiso, *Alternate Citizen's Representative*

EXCUSED – Richard Latham, *Citizen's Representative*

ABSENT – Michael Dorman, *Building Inspector*; Dee Voss, *Town Planner*; and Michelle Auger, *Pollard School Principal*

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER - 9:31 a.m.

MINUTES – J. Sherman motions to approve the minutes of 09/15/2017. Motion seconded by D. Garlington. No discussion. None opposed. All in favor except for Chief McArdle and Lisa Withee who both abstained. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT- George Kalil, property owner on Walton Rd., in attendance to speak about the possible closing of Walton Rd. States that he's been unaware of meetings regarding Walton Rd. and didn't get involved but would like to comment as it appears the closure could be permanent. Provided a proposal he came up with of moving the block over to Shady Ln. and then making Walton Rd. one-way after the commercial building where the road block is currently located. He states that it would reduce the traffic on the road and would make it one-way from the direction of Rte 121A to Rte 125. Explains how this would still allow access to his business from Rte 125.

Chief McArdle questions his suggestion of closing Shady Ln. G. Kalil indicates that it would prevent cars from speeding on Shady Ln. Chief Jones comments that the issue is cars speeding on Walton Rd. and the road block is currently set up in a location that keeps the flow of traffic between Shady Ln. and Walton Rd.

Chief Jones questions how many legal parking spaces are at his business on Walton Rd. G. Kalil states about 6-8 spaces. Chief McArdle asks him how many legal parking spaces. G. Kalil indicates that he would have to review his plan to answer the question.

D. Garlington questions what the hardship is if the Town closed Walton Rd. as proposed. G. Kalil states that it would limit access to customers. S. Cafiso questions how far up Walton Rd. he owns. G. Kalil states he owns up to where it is blocked. S. Cafiso questions the possibility if there would be room to build parking spaces when the turnaround is designed. D. Garlington explains that there is no intention of making a turnaround.

Chief Jones explains her concerns to making a portion of a road one-way. G. Kalil explains that he's trying to find a resolution that works for the residents and his business. Chief Jones asks if his main concern is access for customers to the business. G. Kalil confirms it is giving people access while briefly speaking about the turnaround on Rte 125 before the lights at the intersection of Rte 121A his customers

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use. D. Garlington states that the turnaround he is referring to is actually an access entrance to Skips Garage and is not a turnaround. G. Kalil questions why an access wasn't provided to every business on Rte 125. Chief Jones questions if there is access to the 2nd floor businesses from Rte 125. G. Kalil confirms there is.

S. Cafiso questions G. Kalil as to whether or not he has a plan to propose, should the road closure happen. G. Kalil likes the suggestion of parking by the barrier. S. Cafiso suggests he bring it to the attention of the Board of Selectmen. D. Garlington states that barrier is currently lined up with the catch basin access nearby and also explains the easement nearby with NH DOT. Further mentions the process involved in closing the road, including moving the fire hydrant and landscaping and offers to meet with G. Kalil on site to go over the proposed closure. S. Cafiso recommends to G. Kalil to get a copy of his plot plan of the property to help with his parking issue.

Chief Jones states to G. Kalil that the Committee is only an advisory Committee to the Board of Selectmen and that she will make sure to reach out to him as the process moves forward.

Public Comment closed at 10:10 am

OLD BUSINESS – Review of Walton Rd.

Chief Jones speaks with the Committee about G. Kalil's concerns and hardship. S. Cafiso comments on the current proposal to closing Walton Rd. being the best option. Chief Jones states that she would not be in favor of making only a portion of the road one-way. D. Garlington confirms that he will meet up with G. Kalil. J. Sherman comments that the Board of Selectmen will need a recommendation from the Committee to either extend the temporary closure or to close Walton Rd.

D. Garlington motions to extend the temporary closure of Walton Rd. to 12/31/2018. Motion seconded by S. Cafiso. No discussion. All in favor except for J. Sherman who abstains as Board of Selectmen. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS – Discuss resident's request for street light at the Village Way/Main St. intersection.

Chief Jones suggests tabling this to the next meeting as M. Dorman is unavailable to speak on it. S. Cafiso mentions that he's reviewed the location of the pole and should a street light be placed on it, how it would be just as far away as the other street light on the other side. He further mentions that a new pole would have to be installed at the intersection for a street light. D. Garlington questions if it is a safety issue. Chief Jones explains that she would need to speak with M. Dorman in order to get more information for the request and will report back to the Committee once she does.

OLD BUSINESS – Update on request for no-thru trucking on Smith Corner Rd.

Chief Jones states that she's viewed the traffic counts completed by NH DOT on July 10 – 13, 2017 but it only showed the volume of traffic not the type of vehicles. Also mentions that she has reached out to the concerned resident for more information but has not heard back as of to date. S. Cafiso mentions that the resident did reach out to him about a truck that took out a pole in front of her house. Chief Jones states that the traffic counts were 1,278 from July 10th-11th, 1,320 from July 11th-12th, and 1,294 from July 12th-13th. States that the location of these counts was at the town line. D. Garlington suggests the counts were most likely day to day traffic. Chief Jones states that she will reach out to Rockingham Planning Commission to inquire about conducting a traffic count that tracks the type of vehicle.

OLD BUSINESS – Walton Rd.

Chief Jones explains that they are moving forward with a proposed Warrant Article for the closure. D. Garlington questions if anyone would like to join him when he meets with G. Kalil. A. Wiggin expresses his interest to attend.

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OTHER BUSINESS –

Chief Jones mentions that she's in the process of drafting a procedure to post on the website about how to bring a matter before the Committee.

OTHER BUSINESS –

Chief Jones briefs the Committee on R. Latham's concerns on an increase in traffic on Sweethill Rd. Chief Jones mentions the traffic counts completed by NH DOT do show an 11% annual growth in volume of traffic on Sweethill Rd. from 2015 to 2016 and mentions that last traffic count completed was in August/September 2016. Chief Jones states that she will place the matter back on the Agenda for the next meeting when R. Latham is present.

OTHER BUSINESS –

Chief Jones mentions a second matter brought to her attention by R. Latham, which is trash pick-up on the opposite side of the road from the direction the trucks are traveling. L. Withee explains that this issue has been ongoing with JRM. D. Garlington mentions that picking up trash this way is acceptable on some roads and suggests coming up with a list the Town can give JRM that this practice should be avoided on. Mentions his uncertainty on whether or not the Town can regulate the way they pick up trash. Chief Jones request D. Garlington put a list together to present at the next meeting.

S. Cafiso questions if there any set criteria with roads with the lines down the middle. D. Garlington explains that they are placed on destination streets and are not recommended for subdivisions. S. Cafiso suggests possibly using this as criteria for JRM. D. Garlington confirms he will work on a list for the next meeting. Chief Jones suggests the list might need to be based on the geography of the road.

OLD BUSINESS – Safe Routes to School.

Chief Jones states that they will table this until the next meeting when D. Voss is present. J. Sherman mentions a memo that was recently sent from the engineers on the status of the project. Chief Jones will look into getting a copy of the memo and distributing it to the Committee.

OLD BUSINESS – Update from State on Palmer Ave/Elm Street intersection.

D. Garlington explains if they pave Kingston Rd. it won't be until next year, 2018. Believes that NH DOT set aside funds specifically for this project.

J. Sherman briefly mentions that the Safe Routes to School and Westville Road Bridge projects are slated for next summer as well. D. Garlington recommends the Town keep in contact with the State to make sure communication is maintained so everyone is aware of each project to keep them coordinated. Questions if the plans are finalized for the Safe Routes to School. J. Sherman believes the memo should have the dates. D. Garlington indicates that the State bids usually go out in the fall.

OTHER BUSINESS –

D. Garlington mentions some shrubs along Jesse George Rd. and Main St. blocking the view of traffic and explains his attempts to speak with the homeowner regarding this matter without success. Questions if the Committee can send a letter to the resident indicating the issue they are causing. Chief Jones questions any Town Ordinances regarding this matter. J. Sherman suggests speaking with M. Dorman. S. Cafiso mentions his conversations with the property owner and issues with car lights coming into the window.

D. Garlington motions that the Committee send a letter to the property owner on Jesse George Rd. to make the homeowner aware of the traffic safety issue the shrubs are causing. Motion seconded by L. Withee. No discussion. All in favor. Motion passed.

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OTHER BUSINESS –

S. Cafiso briefly speaks about the traffic issues at Pollard School during student pick up explaining how the vehicles are doing u-turns in front of the Historical Society and at the end of Davis Park. Chief Jones indicates that she will send a patrol cruiser out to this area during these times.

OTHER BUSINESS –

S. Cafiso comments about vehicles parking on the side of the road in the wrong direction as well as backing into their driveways along Main St. Mentions his concerns of vehicles cutting over on the wrong side of the road to do this, especially in bad weather. Chief Jones will mention this to the patrol officers and explains that other than the winter parking ban, there are no other restrictions for parking on Main St.

OTHER BUSINESS –

L. Withee questions who paved Sweethill Rd. A. Wiggin indicates it is NH DOT since it's a State road. L. Withee mentions the grade of gravel along the side of it. S. Cafiso explains that it's recycled concrete, which is very loose gravel. A. Wiggin mentions that the residents have already complained to NH DOT and believes it's a safety issue for pedestrians walking along the gravel. D. Garlington mentions that the gravel placed on the shoulder of the road is done to protect the pavement.

ACTION ITEMS – #1. Quarterly traffic statistics from radar panels.

Chief Jones mentions that radar panels along Forrest St. and Sweethill Rd. have been reported as not always flashing and mentions that in bad weather, this will occur as they are run by solar.

- Northbound Main St. radar showed a daily average in October of 31 mph, with the busiest traffic day being Sunday, and the majority of the traffic was in the 31-35 mph range.
- Forrest St. for September through October showed an average incoming at 27.4 mph and an outgoing of 30.2 mph, with a majority at 32/34 mph and a few maxed at 62 mph.
- Sweethill Rd. for September through October showed an average incoming at 31.5 mph and an outgoing of 32.8 mph, with a majority at 36/38 mph and a max speed of 77 mph.

Chief Jones explains that the police department collects this data regularly and will always have it available if requested. D. Garlington questions if they are considering moving any of the temporary radar panels. Chief Jones indicates that she'd like to move them based on need.

ACTION ITEMS –

#4. Schedule public hearing with Board of Selectmen regarding speed limits on classified roads.

Chief Jones mentions the NH RSA provided to her by the Town Manager previously which indicates that neither the Board of Selectmen nor the Committee can change speed limits. NH RSA 265:60 Basic Rule and Maximum Limits speaks about a blanket statutory limit of 35 mph on Class 5 roads. Chief Jones further explains the possibility of changing the limits by completing a traffic engineering study following the MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) and Federal Highway Administration Program (USLIMITS 2). Explains the USLIMITS 2 is a web based program where you put in data of volume, measured speed, road character, crash history and other factors some up with a recommended speed limit. S. Cafiso questions if the radar sign data could be used as argument to reduce the speed limits. Chief Jones explains that the speed limits should be set within 5 mph of the measured 85th percentile of speed.

Chief Jones speaks about her conversation with Mr. Lambert at NH DOT regarding studies that have indicated that speeds are not affected by changes in the speed limit but are a function and character of the roadway. States that Mr. Lambert has offered to meet with the Committee to further explain the

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process. Chief Jones explains that they will not be able to go forward with a Public Hearing and suggests the Committee identify 5 roads to propose changing the speed limits on.

S. Cafiso questions what defines a Class 5 road. D. Garlington explains that it's any road the Town. S. Cafiso briefly speaks about roadways and the constant straightening and flattening of them which is actually making them faster roads to travel and the misconception that wider roads are safer. Chief Jones mentions the most complaints for speed are on the straighter roads and confirms that she will reach out to Mr. Lambert and invite him to the next meeting.

#5. Schedule public hearing with regarding intersection at Jesse George and Old Rd.

Chief Jones went before the Board of Selectmen on 11/13/2017 and they motion and approved to place a stop sign on Jesse George Rd at the intersection of Old Road and remove the yield sign on Old Road. D. Garlington indicates that the Highway Department will be making this change.

#6. Pollard Road/Congressional Ave drainage issue – update on status.

This matter is still moving forward by Warrant Article.

OTHER BUSINESS –

Chief Jones provides the 2018 meeting schedule to the members.

ADJOURNMENT- D. Garlington motions to adjourn meeting. Motion seconded by L. Withee. All in favor. None Opposed. Motion passes, meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.

NEXT MEETING DATES –

- March 16, 2018**
- June 15, 2018**
- September 14, 2018**
- December 14, 2018**

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Gibbs,
Recording Secretary