



(APPROVED)

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

PLAISTOW HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

MEETING DATE – Friday, May 15, 2015

PRESENT – Police Chief Kathleen Jones, *Chairman*; Fire Chief John McArdle, *Vice-Chairman*; Sean Fitzgerald, *Town Manager* (arrived at 9:40 am); Dan Garlington, *Highway Department Supervisor*; John Sherman, *Selectman Representative*; Michael Dorman, *Building Inspector* (arrived at 10 am); Lisa Withee, *Citizen's Representative* and Michelle Auger, *Pollard School Principal*

EXCUSED – Richard Latham, *Citizen's Representative*

ABSENT – Town Planner and Ernie Sheltry, *Citizen's Representative*

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER - 9:33 a.m.

MINUTES – D. Garlington motions to approve the minutes of 01/23/2015, seconded by L. Withee. No discussion. None opposed. All in favor except J. Sherman, who abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT- None

NEW BUSINESS – Electronically distribute monthly Main Street radar panel reports for January through April 2015.

K. Jones briefly explains that she's currently in the process of training Sgt. Mazza on how to collect the data on the radar units. Expects to have the data to everyone shortly. J. Sherman questions how time consuming the process is to collect the data. K. Jones explains one week of data takes up to 10 minutes to download.

NEW BUSINESS – Discuss lowering Town roads posted at 30 mph to 25 mph.

D. Garlington comments that he'll get a list of roads that are currently posted at 30 mph for the next meeting, which is probably only 6 roads. K. Jones asks if there are any streets the Town should consider lowering. D. Garlington explains how the Town doesn't post any secondary roads.

J. Sherman questions if the Town has a map that highlights the speeds posted on the roads throughout Town. D. Garlington doesn't believe so and will look into it. K. Jones mentions that there might be a Town Ordinance that lists all the roads and their speeds.

D. Garlington suggests when new roads are created, they immediately be posted at 25 mph so they are accepted at the time they are created. If they are not accepted immediately, they default to 30 mph until a public hearing is held to reduce the speed limit. Explains having the roads at 25 mph will help law enforcement enforce speed, make them safer, and keep all of them consistent.

K. Jones questions about checking with planning to see if there is a list of all Town roads and their speed limits. S. Fitzgerald explains that adding the speed of the roads to a map can easily be done with GIS. J. McArdle asks who will handle this. S. Fitzgerald indicates that he'll work with D. Garlington to complete it. D. Garlington again mentions that all subdivision and side streets are under the assumption of 30 mph and suggests holding a public hearing to have all Town Class V roads be reduced to 25 mph.

NEW BUSINESS – Discuss possible restructuring of snow plow routes with NH DOT.

(APPROVED)

D. Garlington mentions that NH DOT has agreed to pave North Avenue. He suggests the Town hold off on having any discussions with NH DOT about snow plow routes until the paving of North Avenue is completed. States that even if the Town takes over snow removal, the State will still own the road and be responsible for all maintenance and upkeep.

S. Fitzgerald comments how historically the State brings roads up to good condition such as repaving it before turning it over. D. Garlington cautions about making any improvement to State roads to avoid the assumption that the Town is caring for it.

NEW BUSINESS – Vehicle counts to be completed by NH DOT.

S. Fitzgerald briefly mentions that the NH DOT will be completing road counts on Palmer Avenue, Sweethill Road, and Pollard Road. Explains that these counts will show how many trucks are traveling on these roads. NH DOT will be capturing the data for approximately 3 days and would like the counts to be completed before schools close for the summer. Comments how he'd like NH DOT to also perform road counts on Route 125, Route 108, and Main Street this summer.

NEW BUSINESS – Safe Routes to School Grant.

S. Fitzgerald mentions that the Town has an agreement with NH DOT to start design efforts for the Safe Routes to School Grant. Expects to start shortly and will be meeting with Hoyle, Tanner & Associates within the next month. Mentions how the Town has received the required certifications and explains the costs incurred to date for the grant.

NEW BUSINESS – Route 125 Expansion

J. Sherman questions if the Committee has ever been involved with the Route 125 expansion project. S. Fitzgerald explains that they did have a meeting about the previous phase of the project and how it could have some more if issues come up that need to be discussed.

J. Sherman questions if NH DOT will meet with the Board of Selectmen to provide them any updates on the expansion. S. Fitzgerald states how they'll meet in the future once they complete their bid process. D. Garlington comments how it's his understanding the bid process will begin this fall.

J. Sherman mentions the RSMS and suggests a presentation to the Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen on what it does in order to prepare them for an update in 2016. S. Fitzgerald mentions that he probably has a PowerPoint on RSMS already. J. Sherman would to make this one of the first agenda items this fall for the Budget Committee.

NEW BUSINESS – Culvert on Pollard Road and Congressional Ave.

S. Fitzgerald briefs the Committee about his recent meeting with Normandeau Associates, how the Town expects to replace the culvert on Pollard Road and Congressional Avenue by fall, and the funds for this project were encumbered from last year.

OLD BUSINESS – Update on flashing school zone lights for TRMS and TRHS on Greenough Road.

K. Jones mentions her conversation with Sally Gunn at NH DOT who explained that since Greenough Road is a Town road the Town can do what it chooses but did suggest we review the rules and recommendations in the MUTCD (Manual of Uniform Traffic Control) first. Further mentioned to be careful not to have too many signs on a road. K. Jones mentions the recent changes to crossing guard duties on Greenough Road and how the traffic flow has improved. Believes that there are currently sufficient signs for crossing at the schools and additional costly signs don't seem necessary. J. Sherman questions about signage on the Atkinson side of the road. K. Jones mentions how anything posted on the Atkinson side would be Atkinson's responsibility.

(APPROVED)

L. Withee mentions how there seems to be a blind spot at the crosswalk by Cottonwood Road. Suggests placing a flashing crosswalk sign near it similar to the ones at UNH. S. Fitzgerald explains how the Town has looked at similar sign options through the Safe Routes to School Grant.

K. Jones briefly mentions the resignation of longtime Crossing Guard, Gil Brasil who has been a crossing guard at the TRMS and Pollard School for over 17 years. Informs everyone that Crossing Guard Linda Hale will be taking over these locations and a new crossing guard will be hired for the TRHS.

OTHER BUSINESS –

K. Jones mentions the Board of Selectmen's vote for a 6 month trial of commercial "No Thru Trucking" no greater than 12000 GVW on Pollard Road and Forrest Street with a traffic counter on Sweethill Road. D. Garlington explains that the Town should hold off any postings until after the traffic count is completed. States that the signs are ordered and all signs, including the current ones, will show it's for commercial vehicles. Also, reminds everyone that a vehicle has to actually travel the entire length of the road to be considered in violation of "No Thru Trucking".

K. Jones briefly mentions her inquiry to NH DOT about any data on Pollard Road and Forrest Street and that the State doesn't have any but suggested we check with Rockingham Planning Commission.

OLD BUSINESS – Update regarding south Main Street and any discussions between K. Jones and N. Mayville from NH DOT regarding options for it.

K. Jones recently spoke with Nancy Mayville at NH DOT regarding Main Street and minimizing traffic. N. Mayville suggested that the Town outline what it wants to do, take an aerial photo of the location, and submit both to NH DOT so they can review it and work on the legalities, pros, and cons.

S. Fitzgerald would like to invite back K. Russell from NH DOT to discuss the options before proceeding with N. Mayville's suggestion. K. Jones reminds S. Fitzgerald that it was K. Russell who told the Committee to contact N. Mayville regarding this matter. S. Fitzgerald briefly mentions that he had a follow-up discussion with K. Russell and how he'd still like to get the input from him. K. Jones also mentions that K. Russell suggested the Committee speak to David Walker from Rockingham Planning Commission. Questions if the Committee still wants to move forward on this matter.

S. Fitzgerald speaks about the volume of traffic northbound on the slip lane, and questions if closing it would cause traffic congestion on Route 125. He would like to see another traffic count at the slip lane, as well as invite D. Walker and K. Russell to a meeting. K. Jones comments how it could push truck traffic onto other streets. S. Fitzgerald believes that they'll stay on Route 125.

M. Auger comments about the trucks using the Shaw's parking lot as a cut through to take a left onto Route 125. D. Garlington mentions the previous discussion about lifting the "No Thru Trucking" on Wentworth Avenue.

K. Jones will invite D. Walker and K. Russell back to discuss this matter. J. Sherman explains how it's the Town's goal was to minimize truck traffic on Main Street and prevent them from traveling northbound via south Main Street from Route 125.

J. McArdle mentions the 2 options, closing it to all vehicles or closing it to just trucks. S. Fitzgerald reminds everyone that part of the slip lane is property of Haverhill. J. Sherman questions if the Town can post its portion as "No Thru Trucking" and work with Haverhill to see if they'll agree to post their end also. S. Fitzgerald believes Haverhill will want to study this similar to what we have done and explains the possibility of making this "No Thru Trucking" could cause back-ups into Haverhill along Route 125.

D. Garlington questions where the trucks will travel if they close the slip lane. J. McArdle mentions how GPS could direct trucks to other side roads like Chandler Avenue and Westville Road. S. Fitzgerald would like to speak with Haverhill about having the slip lane as "No Thru Trucking" on a temporary trial

(APPROVED)

basis. M. Dorman mentions that NH DOT won't allow closure of a road for trucks if it's used to enter onto a State road. J. McArdle agrees with D. Garlington about trucks using other side roads, which could have more difficult turn radiuses. J. Sherman suggests posting "No Thru Trucking" on the side roads as well. D. Garlington mentions enforcement and the difficulties particularly with Westville Road and suggests placing a weight limit on the Westville Road bridge. Also mentions the higher fuel costs incurred by the trucking companies when traveling on Route 125 as previously mentioned by the companies during a meeting held by S. Savage.

J. Sherman reiterates that the Board of Selectmen want to have truck traffic stay on Route 125. D. Garlington suggests placing traffic counters by the Main Street slip lane and another at Town Hall to see how many travel through Main Street and not turn off before Town Hall.

K. Jones mentions her concern of the possibility of this change pushing trucks onto Main Street at the Route 121A/125 intersection by Sanborn's Candies. J. Sherman mentions the Board of Selectmen's discussions about synchronizing lights to ease problems and costs incurred by trucks when staying on Route 125.

S. Fitzgerald reminds everyone about the next phase of construction on Route 125 which will also push trucks onto Main Street. Would like K. Jones to speak with Haverhill's Police Chief and have D. Walker and K. Russell attend a future meeting to discuss available options.

OLD BUSINESS – Discuss priority areas that radar signs can be utilized at.

K. Jones mentions the options previously provided to the Committee for radar units and asks everyone to keep in mind the time consumption it takes to maintain and run data from each unit. Informs everyone of the intention recently filed with NH Highway Safety for a 50/50 grant in 2016 for radar units. S. Fitzgerald asks if the Committee can be given violation statistics on Town Roads quarterly. K. Jones asks for specific roads. S. Fitzgerald mentions Main, Elm and Forrest Streets. L. Withee comments about the increased enforcement on Forrest Street around 11 am and would like to see more during the commuting hours. K. Jones will pass this on to patrol.

K. Jones asks if the radar signs are worth exploring. S. Fitzgerald believes they are resourceful and the Town should have additional units. D. Garlington suggests obtaining at least 2 additional sign boards that run radar. S. Fitzgerald comments that the Town will look into sign/radar boards.

OTHER BUSINESS –

J. McArdle mentions the upcoming fatal reality being held at the TRHS, which will probably be the last live demo as they move towards video. Believes the students are not fully focused on the live reality when gathered in such a large group.

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J. McArdle mentions clean-up day on May 17th and questions if the residents will be wearing bright colored clothing. K. Jones mentions that the flyer does say to wear a bright noticeable shirt. S. Fitzgerald discusses this event and how they'll look into changes for next year to structure and coordinate a Town wide clean-up. J. McArdle questions who will be assisting in handing out the bags, gloves, etc. S. Fitzgerald states that T. Moore will be assisting. K. Jones explains how a table will be placed in the police department's lobby. S. Fitzgerald agrees that t-shirts should be made available to the volunteers and how there is a budget line in recreation that can be used for it.

ADJOURNMENT- Motion to adjourn by D. Garlington and seconded by J. McArdle. Meeting adjourned None opposed – all in favor.

NEXT MEETING DATE – TBD

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Gibbs, Recording Secretary