

(APPROVED)



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

**PLAISTOW HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**MEETING DATE** – Friday, November 13, 2015

**PRESENT** – Police Chief Kathleen Jones, *Chairman*; Fire Chief John McArdle, *Vice-Chairman*; Michael Dorman, *Building Inspector*; Sean Fitzgerald, *Town Manager*; John Sherman, *Selectman Representative*; Lisa Withee, *Citizen's Representative*; Richard Latham, *Citizen's Representative*; and Greg Jones, *Town Planner*

**EXCUSED** – None

**ABSENT** – Michelle Auger, *Pollard School Principal*; Dan Garlington, *Highway Department Supervisor*; and Ernie Sheltry, *Citizen's Representative*

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER** - 9:34 a.m.

**MINUTES** – S. Fitzgerald motions to approve the minutes of 09/18/2015, seconded by L. Withee. No discussion. None opposed. Motion Passed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**- None

**ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Distributed northbound radar reports for September, 2015. Chief Jones explains a glitch the southbound radar unit is having, which needs to be reset. Once it's reset, the data will be collected and distributed for September and October. October northbound will also be distributed shortly.
2. J. Sherman informs everyone that the RSMS presentation has been completed. Mentions that in 2016, he'd like the presentation done earlier in August so there is a presentation before the work starts and then again when it's completed. S. Fitzgerald mentions what was included in the presentation such as Town roads and sidewalks and asks the Committee to review the presentation. J. Sherman briefly speaks about the classification of roads, breaking them down into categories, and rating them per category.
3. S. Fitzgerald mentions the letter he sent to N. Mayville at NH DOT and that he heard back from her planner who is coming to Plaistow, Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m. He invited members of the Committee to attend the meeting on Tuesday so they can coordinate the discussion with Rockingham Planning Commission and NH DOT on the Main Street corridor.

G. Jones mentions the studies he provided the planner in advance of the meeting. J. Sherman suggests sending him additional studies. S. Fitzgerald recommends sending him the TAP grant to show the efforts made by the Town to seek funding to improve the Main Street corridor.

Chief Jones asks the Committee to consider making a decision on the Border Avenue slip lane and explains that between NH DOT and the City of Haverhill that she's uncertain if Plaistow will be able to close it. Mentions that the City of Haverhill will not discuss it until Plaistow speaks with NH DOT and has their opinion.

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S. Fitzgerald comments about Federal DOT rules and regulations that could be involved, limiting what Plaistow can do with the slip lane. Briefly mentions other roads such as Westville Road and how closing the slip lane could push trucks onto them causing issues on those roads as well. Indicates that before any decision is made, he would like to speak with NH DOT first.

R. Latham mentions his observations at the MA/NH line on Rte 125 and the numerous trucks traveling on the road and staying on Rte 125 northbound. Questions if the Town can do a truck count on the amount of trucks actually traveling northbound onto Rte 121 from the border. S. Fitzgerald asks G. Jones to contact Rockingham Planning Commission to run class counts on Rte 121A.

R. Latham also mentions the sign posted by Heffner's showing the Rte121A/slip lane as the direction to go in order to get to downtown Plaistow. He suggests relocating the sign up closer to Haseltine Avenue. Chief Jones mentions the need to consider the effect it would have on traffic if it was relocated closer to Haseltine Avenue. S. Fitzgerald states that he's not opposed to moving the sign.

4. S. Fitzgerald indicates that NH DOT isn't ready to provide a presentation to the Board of Selectmen because the Rte 125 widening project is currently out for bid. NH DOT mentioned that once the bidding process is complete they will be able to speak with the Board of Selectmen, which they anticipate to be in December. He mentions a business that might be impacted during the project and would like to discuss this concern with NH DOT.
5. Chief Jones indicates that the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter traffic statistics were distributed in October by email.
6. Chief Jones mentions that she expects a decision on the NH Highway Safety Grant for radar units in 2016. Explains that she'd like to wait to discuss this further once the Town knows whether or not they receive the grant. S. Fitzgerald speaks about how costs of radar units are continue to drop. Chief Jones mentions that while the costs of radar units have gone down, the software packages to collect the data adds to the cost.

L. Withee briefly explains her concerns about speeding throughout Town, the seriousness of it, and the need to do more to enforce it. She suggests asking for the assistance of the Sheriff's department to help enforce it. Chief Jones mentions the enforcement patrol that she recently put out as an overtime patrol. Mentions how it specifically focused on speed enforcements on Main and Forrest Streets. Further mentions how it's her intention to have more of these patrols, as long as the police budget allows it.

L. Withee suggests notifying the newspapers of these patrols. Chief Jones explains how the majority of drivers pulled over on Forrest Street are residents living on it. G. Jones questions if they have the ability to do something similar like ez-pass does, by taking a photo of the driver and plate number. Chief Jones mentions the amount of manpower involved would require additional administration staffing. R. Latham suggests a northbound radar unit by the library where he observes a lot of drivers speeding once they pass the first radar unit. J. Sherman suggests changing this action item. K. Jones will change the action item to looking for locations to place radar signs.

7. Chief Jones comments about the no-thru trucking trial period, which is scheduled for a 6 month review in January. J. Sherman comments that the review should be pushed to February.
8. Chief Jones speaks about the road counts from NH DOT for Palmer, Sweethill, and Pollard Roads. Is questioning the time frame listed since the volume of cars for one week seemed very high on Pollard Road. G. Jones states that he'll look into it and find out the time frames.

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9. J. Sherman suggests making this action item an agenda item for the meeting. Chief Jones asks for any members to email her any problems on Main Street they see and possible solutions in order to put together a priority list.

## **NEW BUSINESS – Review Main Street study and discuss slip lane options in preparation for scoping meeting with NH DOT.**

Chief Jones mentions that this matter was already discussed during the action item review. G. Jones reiterates about the meeting on Tuesday and asks for any suggestions on where to take him around to. J. Sherman suggests showing him each intersection on Main Street. Chief McArdle mentions that the most dangerous segment of Main Street, in his experience over the years is from the Kelly Brook swale up to Rison's Machinery. Explains the importance of showing back up to any problem they feel needs solved. J. Sherman would like an itinerary set for the meeting on Tuesday. G. Jones will prepare one and requests accidents statistics for the meeting. Chief Jones will provide accident statistics for the past 10 years on Main Street.

## **OLD BUSINESS – Update on status of scoping meeting with N. Mayville of NH DOT to evaluate options/recommendations for changes to Main Street, including Border Avenue, and changes to Rte 125.**

Chief Jones comments that this item was already discussed during action item review.

## **OLD BUSINESS – Update on Safe Routes to School Grant.**

Chief Jones provides a brief update on the grant and how work will not start until at least January. G. Jones mentions his meeting with the senior planner at NH DOT and Hoyle & Tanner. He indicates that there were a few inconsistencies and how they're currently updating the document and schedule. He explains that the funds won't likely come through until early next year. Chief McArdle questions if the Town is being asked to contribute funds. G. Jones says they are as the grant match. Chief McArdle questions if this is going to the voters in March. M. Dorman comments that the money is already set aside. J. Sherman confirms that there's no warrant article for 2016. G. Jones briefly mentions that S. Fitzgerald was considering asking the Town for additional funding.

## **OLD BUSINESS – Update on status of a public hearing regarding speed limits on classified roads.**

Chief Jones questions if a public hearing is scheduled yet and will follow-up on this with S. Fitzgerald.

## **OTHER BUSINESS –**

Chief Jones mentions a request she received from a resident on Ingalls Terrace who requested speed bumps and/or no parking be posted on the road. J. Sherman questions where people will park that are going to the recreation field. Chief Jones explains that it's the residents that live on Ingalls Terrace who are parking on the road that's the issue. She explains the resident's concern about emergency vehicles not being able to get down the road when the cars are parked on the road. Chief McArdle believes that this is a civil matter between residents. Chief Jones mentions that she's asked the resident to call or take photos when the cars are parked along the road. J. Sherman does not wish to make any changes on Ingalls Terrace.

## **OTHER BUSINESS –**

J. Sherman mentions the new right/left turn lanes on Westville Road at Rte 125. He mentions how the drivers are not observing the new lane rules. Chief Jones will speak with D. Garlington about posting a sign to show the left/right turn lanes.

## **OTHER BUSINESS –**

Chief McArdle discusses the problems with the opticoms on Rte 125 at Market Basket, Pentucket Plaza, and East Road. He explains that he's made several attempts to contact NH DOT about them, but has not received any responses. Mentions that New England Signal is responsible for the opticoms through

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NH DOT. Chief McArdle questions if the Committee can reach out to NH DOT regarding this matter. Chief Jones indicates that she will reach out to Kevin Russell at NH DOT.

## **OTHER BUSINESS –**

M. Dorman mentions the one-way entrance and exit at the NH park-n-ride on Westville Road and how he'd like to see if they can be changed to 2-way traffic. J. Sherman is in agreement with this change and would like to add it as an action item. M. Dorman will look into the process of changing the one-way entrance and exit and report back to the Committee.

## **OTHER BUSINESS –**

M. Dorman brings up the matter of residents illegally shoveling and plowing snow into the roadways over the past winters. Chief Jones will post a notice on the radar board explaining it's illegal to do so, and will also post it on the department's facebook page.

L. Withee questions if something can be posted on facebook about speed limits throughout Town. Chief Jones confirms she will. G. Jones also mentions posting these on the Town's website home page with a link to them on facebook.

## **OTHER BUSINESS –**

R. Latham asks about the status of Elm/Main Street intersection. M. Dorman explains it will be similar to how it is currently, just squared off. J. Sherman explains that it's part of the Safe Route to School Grant. G. Jones mentions that the grant requires them to have 4 or 5 designs, which will be prepared by Hoyle & Tanner and reviewed by the Committee and Board of Selectmen. Briefly explains how NH DOT has to accept any design chosen.

## **OTHER BUSINESS –**

Chief Jones briefly mentions the Trustees that were out recently on Rte 125 cleaning up the trash and overgrown weeds on the median strips. J. Sherman asks if a next session is planned with the Trustees. Chief Jones mentions that they probably won't be able to get them again until next spring as the group is utilized by many communities and booked out for quite some time.

## **OTHER BUSINESS –**

G. Jones informs the Committee that the Planning Board recently approved the Transportation Master Plan. Explains how Federal funding is continuing to become less available and the need for the Town to have a Capital Reserve Account.

**ADJOURNMENT-** Motion to adjourn by G. Jones, seconded by L. Withee. None opposed – all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

## **NEXT MEETING DATE – TBD**

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Gibbs, Recording Secretary