

(APPROVED)



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

PLAISTOW HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

MEETING DATE – Friday, October 24, 2014

PRESENT – Interim Chief Kathleen Jones, *Chairman*; Sean Fitzgerald, *Town Manager*; Michael Dorman, *Building Inspector* (*excused at 10:25 a.m.*); Dan Garlington, *Highway Department Supervisor*; Leigh Komornick, *Town Planner* (*arrived at 10 a.m.*); Dan Poliquin, *Selectman Representative*; Richard Latham, *Citizen's Representative* (*excused at 10 a.m.*); Lisa Withee, *Citizen's Representative*; and Ernie Sheltry, *Citizen's Representative*

EXCUSED – Michelle Auger, *Pollard School Principal* and Fire Chief John McArdle, *Vice-Chairman*

ABSENT – None

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

MINUTES – S. Fitzgerald motions to approve the minutes of 09/12/2014, seconded by D. Garlington. No discussion. None opposed. All in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT- None

NEW BUSINESS – (Not on Agenda)

S. Fitzgerald mentions that the Town has applied for a Transportation Alternative Grant for \$800,000 to help extend the sidewalks and improve Main Street at intersections such as East and West Pine. Provides everyone a copy of a letter by the Board of Selectmen supporting the TAP Grant.

NEW BUSINESS – (Not on Agenda)

R. Latham mentions his observations of JRM Trash & Recycling Trucks crossing over to the wrong side of the road on Sweethill Road in order to collect trash from both sides. Is concerned about this safety issue and would like JRM Trash & Recycling be addressed about it. S. Fitzgerald speaks about a meeting previously scheduled for the Board of Selectmen to speak with them which was cancelled and should be rescheduled shortly. K. Jones asks D. Poliquin to bring this issue up when the Board meets with them. L. Withee mentions how she's seen this happen also. S. Fitzgerald believes the Board will be meeting with JRM on November 3, 2014 and will address it then.

NEW BUSINESS (Not on Agenda)

L. Withee asks about enforcement on Sweethill Road and whether local or State police are responsible for it since it's a State road. K. Jones explains that it's enforced locally. L. Withee asks for directed patrols on Sweethill Road. E. Sheltry adds to the request to include Cifre Lane. K. Jones confirms she will get directed patrols on these roads. L. Withee is concerned that these roads are part of the Safe Route to School Grant but are not safe. S. Fitzgerald suggests tracking enforcement activity on the roads and mentions his personal observations with JRM Trash & Recycling.

L. Withee questions what the speed threshold is for enforcement. K. Jones explains how it's at the discretion of the Officer. D. Garlington asks about the Judge's leniency on speeding tickets. K. Jones explains how the Judge makes a final decision after hearing both parties' cases/statements.

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S. Fitzgerald believes the new Safe Route to School signs should help, but that enforcement will be key. L. Withee suggests the Town contact the media to explain what the signs are about. S. Fitzgerald mentions an article recently in the newspaper regarding the grants and truck traffic.

K. Jones mentions that the residents are already picking up the Safe Route to School lawn signs. D. Garlington questions if site distance was addressed to the residents posting the signs on their lawns. K. Jones states how it was not, and if the issue comes up, it will be addressed.

R. Latham comments how trucks on Sweethill Road are not exceeding the speed limit. K. Jones explains how if a car is traveling 35 mph it will seem like it's going much faster than 35 if you are standing on the side of the road as it passes by.

OLD BUSINESS – Continue discussion on options for South Main Street to control truck traffic entering northbound onto Main Street from Route 125.

The Committee provided K. Jones a quick briefing on this. S. Fitzgerald mentions his last conversation with Chief Savage and how he was going to invite NH DOT down to a meeting to discuss issues such as drainage by North Avenue. Although, he doesn't believe the cost to maintain the road would be feasible.

S. Fitzgerald mentions the previous suggestion of making the southern portion of Main Street one-way. He reiterates his interest in having members of NH DOT Division VI attend the next meeting to discuss options for south Main Street. He reiterates the need to calm traffic on Main Street otherwise, the trucks will use the road instead of Route 125. K. Jones confirms she will invite members from NH DOT Division VI to the next meeting.

D. Poliquin mentions the need to evaluate Haseltine Avenue along with South Main Street. M. Dorman mentions how a portion of the South Main Street is in the City of Haverhill who already made changes to their portion.

S. Fitzgerald briefly mentions how the Town's not prepared to take over any portion of North Avenue. He would like to look into any possible Grants or Federal funding that might be available to assist with these projects. Suggest temporarily posting south Main Street as one-way to restrict vehicles from entering. D. Poliquin expresses his concern how doing so could push trucks onto Westville Road. D. Garlington suggests the Town look into the State posting Route 125 as a truck route.

R. Latham speaks about truck traffic on Kingston Road and Sweethill Road and feels that while the Town is pushing them off Main Street they are pushing them onto roads such as Sweethill and Kingston.

OLD BUSINESS – Discuss the Main Street radar panel chart options handed out on 9/12/14 and determine which ones will be used to distribute monthly traffic statistics.

K. Jones inquires about everyone's preference on the data charts. D. Garlington suggests using the chart showing times and speeds. L. Withee likes the charts showing speeders v. non-speeders, percentage chart, and the averages chart as well. K. Jones mentions how the radars are set at 30 mph to start collecting speed but can change it to a higher speed before it starts collecting.

S. Fitzgerald would like the Patrol Officers to see the charts each month and report back as to what they did with them to enforce speed violations. D. Poliquin comments about the charts and how'd he like to see the complete packet that was provided at the last meeting. L. Withee suggests getting the entire packet on a quarterly basis. S. Fitzgerald briefly mentions how seeing the statics shown on a daily basis would be more helpful than weekly.

D. Garlington questions on whether or not the Committee is planning on moving the signs. S. Fitzgerald mentions their current locations and the costs to power the signs should they get moved. M. Dorman suggests the library as a better location for the northbound sign.

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D. Poliquin suggests having portable signs the Town can move to various locations to collect data where necessary. S. Fitzgerald mentions the drop in costs for radar units over the past several years and suggests looking at smart panels they can place on telephone poles. K. Jones mentions the use of solar radar panels that in the long term, cost much less.

L. Withee asks if the signs in the crosswalks on Main Street are temporary. S. Fitzgerald explains that the Town is purchasing more over the next 18 months under the Safe Routes to School Grant.

K. Jones suggests holding off getting any further radar units until the project is complete. S. Fitzgerald disagrees since the radar units will be portable and placed on streets throughout Town.

K. Jones mentions the discussion at the last meeting on possibly purchasing a Safe Routes to School sign for Elm Street. S. Fitzgerald is unsure if the signs are having a traffic calming effect but would support one. However, he'd prefer to spend the money on the lawn signs.

OTHER BUSINESS –

D. Poliquin questions if the postings were done for the previous signs that were going to be put up for commercial traffic for no-thru-trucking. D. Garlington indicates no. D. Poliquin asks the Committee to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen to lower the GVW to what was originally suggested at 12,000. He explains how the Board of Selectmen changed it to 26,001 GVW. While he understands reducing it back down might affect some vehicles such as landscapers hauling enclosed trailers, it should be minimal. Explains that if the Town is trying to prevent larger vehicles from being on certain roads to help calm traffic and not use the cut thru roads and Main Street, a limit of 26,001 will not work. G. Garlington mentions that a commercial vehicle is defined as 26,001lbs. D. Poliquin explains the changes in commercial vehicles weights, which can now be as low as 10,000. M. Dorman so moves to make a motion as stated by D. Poliquin.

S. Fitzgerald expresses his concerns and how in order to avoid cut-thru from occurring, the Town would need to add more roads to the no-thru trucking list. He suggests the Committee recommend to the Board of Selectmen that they defer the posting until spring to give the Committee a chance to have a follow-up discussion regarding the proposed GVW. D. Poliquin disagrees putting this off. Explains how the Committee has already made the recommendation of 12,000 GVW and would like to see a request to have the Board of Selectmen revisit their original recommendation of 12,000 GVW as opposed to 26,001 GVW.

S. Fitzgerald supports the Committee voting to reinforce their original recommendation but feels the Committee should present the Board of Selectmen with more detail as to why the recommendation is made. D. Garlington questions when they'll begin posting for the trial period. D. Poliquin explains how between colder weather coming and the time it will take to order the signs it will probably be in the spring. D. Garlington suggests East Pine be posted along with Kingshaw Avenue.

No further discussion on the motion, which is seconded by L. Withee. All in favor. None opposed.

ADJOURNMENT- Motion to adjourn by K. Jones and seconded by D, Garlington. Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. None opposed – all in favor.

NEXT MEETING DATE – TBD

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Gibbs, Recording Secretary