

Town of West Bath
Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 6, 2021

Comp Plan Committee:

David Hennessey, Chair
Bob Weir, Vice Chair
Sandra Basgall
Paul Coombs
Darlene Estabrook – arrived 6:40
Toni Tate - absent
Leah Zartarian

Town Staff: Kristine Poland, Town Administrator
Steve Renaud, Road Commissioner

Select board: Kathy Lavalley
Suzanne Andresen
Madelyn Hennessey

Public: Deborah Henderson

- I. Call to Order **at 6:00 pm.**
- II. Attendance and establishment of Quorum: **a quorum was determined.**
- III. Pledge of Allegiance: **recited.**
- IV. Approval of Minutes: **moved by Sandra Basgall, seconded by Bob Weir, motion carried unanimously.**
- V. Business Items:
 1. **Discussion with the Road Commissioner:**

Steve Renaud attended the meeting in his capacity as Road Commissioner. The Road Commissioner responds to complaints, is responsible for the maintenance of Town roads, sign management, clearing of culverts and other general road-related maintenance. The work is performed by the Road Commissioner as time and resources allow. Larger jobs are carried out by contractors under the general direction of the Road Commissioner. Capital projects are brought to the Select board and the Budget Advisory Committee for consideration through the annual budget process.

Renaud contends that West Bath’s current program will not support the level of service expected by the community. The development that has occurred recently has increased the impact on our roads and highlights the need to have staff that can respond immediately to concerns.

The Road Commissioner recommends to hire one person at a minimum of 20 hours per week. In addition to other tasks, the employee would maintain Town properties, including the cemeteries. This would involve mowing, plowing, sanding, tree trimming, culvert maintenance and other general upkeep. This would alleviate the need to have agreements with independent contractors for mowing and winter maintenance. Equipment needed would include a 550- dump truck with plow and sander, lawn mowers, weed whacker, a trailer, chainsaw, and other hand tools. A steel building could be erected next to the sand shed for storage. Renaud estimates a total cost of approximately

\$200,000 to get started, with an annual budget for equipment maintenance. Renaud stressed that the Town would have more responsive service, making the program a good investment for taxpayers. The position will be evaluated and discussed during the annual budget process. Basgall requested a written sequence of events and prioritization of goals to put the plan into place.

Many of the Town roads are cottage roads and dead-end roads that were historically not a priority. Roads were constructed without a solid base and are not in the best condition. The Road Commissioner has been choosing the worst spots to fix correctly. Sabino Road was cited as an example. Currently, the middle of Mountain Road and Birch Point Road need the most work, including but not limited to addressing drainage and erosion. Going forward, the Town should consider adopting an 8-year plan for road management. This plan would inform the annual budget to ensure that we have adequate resources to improve our road infrastructure.

Communication with the winter roads contractor and the Town Office is positive and effective. Working with Maine DOT on State and State aid road issues has been challenging, with either a delayed response or no response to concerns. The Road Commissioner requested direct contact numbers for DOT to improve communication. Renaud would like to see continued support of his goals for the department from the Town, including support of capital requests brought before the Select board and the Budget Advisory Committee.

2. Collaboration with businesses:

Hennessey requested that committee members connect with businesses over the next several weeks. The following businesses were assigned:

- D.R. Coffin's Garage - Darlene Estabrook
- Bath Industrial and Frohmiller Construction – Leah Zartarian
- F.W. Webb and State Farm – Sandra Basgall
- M.W. Sewall – Paul Coombs
- American Steel – Bob Weir
- Derek Dudzic – David Hennessey

Committee members were encouraged to talk with any other business that they have an interest in. Business representatives may be invited to speak at a meeting if they are interested. The following questions should be asked of each business:

- Why did they choose West Bath?
- Are there any issues or problems associated with doing business in West Bath?
- What is their relationship with Town officials and how can we help them succeed?

3. Meeting schedule and next steps:

The next meetings will be Tuesday January 18th and Monday January 31st at 6:00 pm. Jonathan Beane will be invited to attend January 18th.

4. Committee concerns: None.

VI. **Public Comment:** None.

VII. Adjournment: **motion to adjourn at 7:05 pm.**