

Minutes of the Roxbury Selectmen meeting Jan. 22, 2018

In attendance: Selectmen Gerry Davis, Tim O'Brien and Jim Rousmaniere; Welfare Officer Josh Hicks and Treasurer David Jewett

The meeting opened at 7 p.m.

Josh Hicks described a situation in which a town resident has sought assistance to cover rent for an apartment in town. The subject of the town's welfare budget was discussed. On Mr. Hicks' encouragement, the town recently revised its method of setting aside funds for welfare needs by shifting from an annual allocation of funds to the town operating budget to annually directing a specific sum -- \$1,000 is the figure -- to a trust fund so as to build up a reserve. Treasurer Jewett reported that that reserve now amounts to several thousand dollars. Josh reported that he will keep the selectmen posted on the current matter.

The selectmen and Treasurer Jewett agreed that they will hear from department heads regarding 2018 budget requests at the regular selectmen's meeting of January 29; that meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m.

There was discussion regarding the insurance requirement for private rentals of Town Hall. It was agreed that selectman Rousmaniere would contact Primex, the town's insurer, to see if the Primex policy can cover private rentals.

There was discussion regarding the costs of plowing Branch Road. The state maintains the road (including paving it) under summer maintenance, but the town plows it under the category of winter maintenance. The question is whether the costs of that winter work should be reimbursed to the town. Selectman Rousmaniere agreed to investigate.

There was discussion regarding an invitation by the city of Keene to participate in an annual hazardous waste collection program. The town currently allocates \$200 in the annual budget to reimburse local residents who are charged for disposing of hazardous materials at the Keene landfill/transfer station. The invitation from Keene would grant Roxbury residents access to 24 collections during the year at a cost of roughly \$900. The selectmen agreed not to take the offer but instead discuss the matter with transfer officials in Marlborough. (Roxbury annually pays Marlborough \$13,500 for use of its transfer station.)

There was discussion regarding the state highway department's road improvement/expansion project along Route 9. It was reported that a resident had complained about disturbances associated with work on Houghton Ledge Road, and that the highway department had been alerted to such concerns. Further, the selectmen took note of the fact that substantial tree-cutting had taken place on the north side of Route 9, despite the state's not having filed a timber-tax application with the selectmen. It was agreed that the state will be approached on this subject.

The selectmen discussed the prospect of undertaking culvert repair and replacement work in 2018. Two potentially costly cases were discussed. It was agreed that the selectmen will ask Henry Underwood of the Southwest Region Planning Commission to send details of those culverts to Town Hall; Mr. Underwood previously reported that he had not received a final sign-off of his full report about an extensive culvert study project in town but might be able to provide information about a couple particular culverts on request.

It was reported that city officials will conduct an emergency services drill related to Babbidge Dam on Feb. 6. Selectman Davis said that the city has not yet provided a promised copy of an updated emergency action plan for the dam. The city will be approached on that matter,

There was discussion regarding an effort by some residents of Troy to revise the formula by which the operating budget of the Monadnock School District is funded by the district's six member towns. The proposed change, which will be subject to discussion at the February 3 school district deliberative session, would send property taxes soaring in Roxbury if it became law. It was noted that efforts will be made to encourage Roxbury residents to attend the deliberative session to address the proposal. It was noted that upcoming edition of the Roxbury Report newsletter will include important information about the matter.

It was reported that the city of Keene has requested a meeting with Roxbury officials to discuss an upgrade of Woodward Pond Dam that is scheduled to be undertaken in either 2019 or 2020. The selectmen agreed that, due to work associated with municipal affairs both before and after the scheduled March 13 Town Meeting, such a meeting with Keene officials should be scheduled in April. Keene officials will be contacted.

The selectmen discussed the subject of how the classification of town roads should be handled in cases where a Class V road has not been maintained by town officials for long periods of time, such as 15 years. It was reported that Attorney Tom Hanna has been asked to provide guidance on the matter.

Selectman Davis prepared the manifest of bills to be paid; the manifest was signed by the selectmen. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.