

**Seymour Public Works Department**

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Dennis G. Rozum
Director

Board of Public Works Regular Meeting
Monday, March 11, 2013 at 7:00 PM
Public Works Garage

Members present: Chairman Sean Walsh, Vice-Chairman Wayne Finkle, Al Bruno, Phil Wilhelmy

Members not present: Yashu Putorti

Others present: Craig Stevens, Robert Koskelowski, Jr., Michael Laban

ITEM #1: Call meeting to order

→ Sean Walsh opened the meeting at 7:05 PM

ITEM #2: Pledge of Allegiance

ITEM #3: Public comment

→ Mike Laban, 10 Clifton Street, is a Public Works employee. He stated that on Friday, ^{March} ~~February~~ 8, during the ~~blizzard~~ ^{storm}, he was on a job when he went to make a call on his cell phone and it would not work. He stated that the town shut down employees' cell phones without informing them that it would be done. He stated that there are radios in trucks, but employees rely on cell phones as there is no base radio at the Public Works garage or transfer station. He feels that not having cell phones is a safety concern, especially when employees are out on a job by themselves. How would an employee call out of an emergency? He asked if the decision was made for financial reasons why the Public Works director and foreman and the fire departments still have cell phones. He asked why it is always the Public Works department that must take the hit when it comes down to finances. He stated that Public Works employees are human beings that work for the town and make sure other are safe and ambulances and the fire department respond to calls, but asked who is protecting the Public Works employees? He concluded by saying that the manner in which the situation was handled – having the phones disconnected during a major storm without notice – was a slap in the face.

→ Robert Koskelowski, Jr., 10 Poplar Drive, is a Public Works employee. He stated that in speaking with others around town it seems employees run the department and questioned when management lost control of the department. He advised the Board to look into the issue and cautioned that if something is not done, the small department will crash hard.

Motion to discuss concerns regarding cell phone disconnection raised by Michael Laban during Public Comment.

→ Motion: Bruno

Second: Wilhelmy

Vote- Yes: 4, No: 0, Abstain: 0

→ Bruno asked what type of phones were disconnected and who else has such phones. Stevens showed his phone to the Board and Laban explained that town custodians, firemen, and some employees in other departments still have working phones.

→ Wilhelmy asked how many employees had their phones disconnected. Laban stated that there are 18 Public Works employees – a director, a foreman, and 16 men in the workforce. All 16 men had their phones disconnected, while the director and foreman's phones remain operable.

→ Finkle asked if the new high-band radios in trucks can be used to communicate. Laban stated that there is no base at the Public Works garage or at the transfer station and that some machines do not have radios nor are men always within earshot of radios in vehicles making this not a viable communication option at this time.

→ Walsh stated that the line item for communications was cut by 50% last year, at which time the Public Works director was told to figure out how to divvy up funds and make it work. Walsh said that the word may have not gotten down to the employees, but there was notice given to the director. He also stated that the Board of Finance has been adamant that they will not transfer money into this line item.

→ Wilhelmy asked if the department has hand-held radios. Stevens said no, a roof leak destroyed the old ones, but they would not have worked with the new system anyway.

Motion to have the Board of Public Works send a letter of inquiry to the First Selectman and Boards of Finance and Selectmen asking for an explanation as to why the Public Works employees' cell phones were disconnecting in consideration of the safety aspect resulting from lack of communication.

→ Motion: Wilhelmy Second: Finkle

Vote – Yes: 4, No: 0, Abstain: 0

ITEM #4: Financial Update

→ Walsh stated that he talked to Tony today about getting the financial report broken down and straightened out, but it hasn't happened yet.

→ Walsh also said that the Finance department will be making transfers to rectify line item overages from the recent storm, but he is not sure where the money will be coming from or when the transfers will occur.

→ Finkle asked if the numbers were put together for FEMA reimbursement and if there is any idea what the town may be getting back. Walsh said the numbers have not been finalized, but, as of right now, the number is around \$350,000 and the reimbursement rate is 70%. He explained that municipalities can select the most expensive 48 hour window to submit for reimbursement. Bruno noted that the federal sequester may impact FEMA reimbursements.

→ Walsh asked the Board if anyone had a problem with the department's capital plan as put forth with two trucks and a mower. Finkle stated that he has a problem spending \$70,000 on a mower when a good quality mower can be purchased for \$35,000, the department still has so many more needs, and there is uncertainty as to exactly what the department will be responsible for mowing moving forward. He stated that he will go with the majority decision of the Board despite his personal opinion.

ITEM #5: Vehicle Update

→ Stevens stated that most vehicles are up and running, but noted that Rozum's truck had an electrical problem during the storm, a manual is needed for the JCB at a cost of \$800, Trucks 58 and 59 have tranny issues, the truck purchased from Aquarion is having intermittent issues, and the bucket truck still has a massive tranny leak.

→ Wilhelmy asked where the department is with change of season preparations. Stevens stated that varsity baseball starts soon, but snow and downed fencing have prevented the preparation of the fields.

→ Stevens asked if employees must fill out sheets for all vehicles, even those under a certain GVW. The Board confirmed that they want sheets filled out for all vehicles regardless of federal law.

→ Finkle asked if training on how to properly complete a pre-trip vehicle inspection has been set up for department employees. Stevens said that, yes, training is being set up through the First Selectman's office. Stevens also noted that CPR training will be offered to all town employees.

ITEM #6: Transfer Station Update

→ Walsh asked the tractor has been repaired. Stevens said yes.

ITEM #7: Work Performance Update

→ Stevens presented the Board with a list of work performed during the past month. He also noted that effort has been made to fix every little thing in between handling snow removal. He stated that every plow frame has been welded and that 6 tons of cold patch has been put down despite the department being down five guys. Stevens also commended the crew on the handling of Friday's storm, which he noted was a tricky clean-up.

ITEM #8: Other business

→ Wilhelmy asked when interviews for the mechanic's position will be held. Walsh said he is looking into when everyone on the interviewing committee is available to do the interviews.

→ Walsh stated that the computer system purchased by the town is stilling inoperable due to software issues.

Motion to add approval of January 14, 2013 regular meeting minutes to agenda.

→ Motion: Wilhelmy Second: Finkle

Vote- Yes: 4, No: 0, Abstain: 0

Motion to approve January 14, 2013 regular meeting minutes without alteration.

→ Motion: Wilhelmy Second: Finkle

Vote- Yes: 4, No: 0, Abstain: 0

ITEM #9: Executive session (personnel)

→ Executive session was not deemed necessary.

ITEM#10: Public comment

→ Michael Laban stated that he was surprised to hear that employees will have to take CPR classes. Stevens stated that the courses will be offered to all town employees through the town-wide safety

committee, but will not be mandatory. Laban asked if an employee were to perform CPR if they would be protected by the Good Samaritan Act. Bruno stated that, yes, they would as this is a general public policy.

ITEM #11: Adjournment

→ Motion to adjourn at 8:30 PM.

Motion: Wilhelmy Second: Bruno

Vote — Yes: 4, No: 0, Abstain: 0

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nicole Knott".

Nicole Knott