

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE

A JOINT MEETING OF THE D.P.W. SUBCOMMITTEE and TOWN COUNCIL

TUESDAY October 17, 2022 6:00pm RICE ROOM

MINUTES

1. Call to Order 6:00 PM
2. Roll Call: Councilor/DPW Chair Michael Marketti, Councilors Joseph Daou, Gus Steeves. Citizen Members Steve Lazo and Kevin Splaine. Also in attendance Town Manager Michael McCall, and Philip Harding, Operations Manager DPW.
3. Consider and approve Joint DPW/Town Council Meeting Minutes of October 11, 2022 (Postponed)
4. Citizens Forum: Kevin Splaine asked about South Street project and the leveling coat on the street for winter. Philip Harding of DPW said he talked to the companies and they said the work would be done at the end of this week or next. Steve Lazo said [asphalt] plants to close November 17-18.
5. Discuss the Town Manager's appointment of VHB and Tighe & Bond as interim engineers for on-call services. Entertain a motion to recommend to Town Council for confirmation and authorize the Town Manager to sign all related documents. Motion made by Lazo, Second by Splaine.

Discussion: Kevin Splaine asked about a "third vendor" and specifics such as pricing for engineer work. Town Manager McCall answered questions about the need for an engineering firm because we have none at present. He also spoke about the cost break-down, and hiring more than one firm to avoid conflicts including a third firm. Splaine asked if we could hire one private engineering firm? McCall said that is something other towns do. Councilor Steeves asked about the cost differences between hiring someone in-house, or a private firm, and if the town manager had any concerns about the conflicts. McCall said he has not looked at the cost differences yet and we can look at other firms as well to avoid conflicts. Citizen George Chenier asked why we would hire an engineering firm, at taxpayer expense, to oversee another engineering firm (Tighe & Bond) who is already providing full time oversight on West Street? McCall said some projects we would not need to provide oversight, while some projects such as road work we would. Councilor Scott Lazo said he would prefer hiring a Clerk of the Works for some of the other road projects. Councilor Daou asked if a Clerk of the Works would need a General Contractor License? Councilor Lazo said there are different licenses for different types of work, but a clerk would also need experience. Chenier spoke about the various projects in town and the town could save money by hiring a Clerk of the Works. Councilor Lazo asked about the hiring of a DPW Director. McCall said he hoped to hire one before the end of the year. Councilor Montigney asked that we not vote on this tonight at the Town Council meeting. Members asked more questions about hiring other engineering firms. McCall said he was trying to be pro-active. Councilor Lazo suggested we postpone. A motion was made to postpone by Steve Lazo, second by Splaine. **Vote 5-0 to postpone until a future meeting.**

6. Discuss sidewalks on Chestnut St and East Main St. **Discussion:** Splaine spoke about the sidewalk on Chestnut Street, where a section of the sidewalk is missing around a telephone pole. Mr. Harding said he has talked to National Grid and Verizon and has not received a response. He said will get someone from DPW to fill in the hole. Splaine also spoke about the poor condition of the sidewalk in front of Lensdale Gate on East Main Street. Montigney asked that the Chestnut Street sidewalk be fixed before Halloween. He also spoke about the poor condition of the sidewalk on East Main, and that the contractor should be responsible to fix the sidewalk. Mr. Harding said he has a meeting next week with the contractor and will bring it up.

7. Adjourn. **Motion by Splaine, second by Lazo. Vote 5-0.**