

**Minutes of a  
Selectboard / Board of Health / Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting  
in person & via Zoom  
June 4, 2024**

Present: Will Cosby, Hussain Hamdan, Robert MacLean – Selectboard  
Tinky Weisblat, Gal Friday; Virginia Gabert, Treasurer and Financial Administrator  
Gary Mitchell, Chris Tirone, and Robert Sears

**The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.** Warrants were signed.

1. **Roads were first on the agenda.** Gary said that more work had been done on Route 8A and that that road was scheduled to be paved the following Friday, weather permitting. Progress had been made even if the work wasn't quite finished. Will said that although he had not seen an actual description of the work, the representative from the Department of Transportation had promised that the guardrails would be replaced there.

Will said that he had no updates from the DCR. Hussain noted that the DCR had put some new gates up in the forest, blocking Moody Spring Road and Gould Meadow. Chris observed that he had found someone camping at one of those sites.

Will said he had heard a complaint about the condition of Hallockville Road, including that the ditches were filling with silt. Since that road was the main one to the South Hawley Cemetery, he was concerned. Hussain said that the DCR had tried to do some maintenance on that road a few years back, which had caused some controversy **with** the DEP over wetlands issues and had probably discouraged the department from working there. He asserted that responsibility for Hallockville Road should be clarified. There had been competing narratives as to responsibility. Originally, in 1982, the Town had turned the State Forest roads over to the State. When DCR fixed Middle and Hunt Roads, Hawley had taken over maintenance of those roads. Hallockville Road was not covered by the Agreement with the DCR, which handled Hunt and Middle Roads. There was one view, therefore, that Hawley had no responsibility for that road. However, there was also a Town cemetery on it, which called into question whether the town could have discontinued the road and turned it over to the State in the first place. With many recent changes at the DCR, he argued, it might be a good idea to discuss the issue with the department. Tinky was asked to contact Mark Jester at the DCR and ask him to talk to the board in person or by telephone. There was consensus that maintenance of Hallockville Road in its entirety would create major additional work for Hawley's DPW. Hussain suggested that a potential alternative might be just to maintain the stretch of Hallockville between Middle Road and the cemetery, thereby preserving public access to the cemetery without keeping the whole road open.

Will explained that bids had been opened earlier in the day for the work on Ashfield Road. Davenport construction seemed to have the lowest bid at \$587,360. That would of course have to be approved by FRCOG and by the engineer. While waiting for all that, the road crew was going to get work on the ditches. Gary said he was considering his next steps there. Will noted that the bid was less than the grant money; he said he hoped the contractor could perhaps put in a little extra work, perhaps to do with the culvert near the Lavalley residence.

Will reminded the group that earlier in the day the town had applied for another grant to work on Ashfield Road.

Gary said he hoped the road crew's part of the work on Ashfield Road would be done by July 1. Will noted that the contract with Davenport should be coming soon. After some discussion of how the contract might be approved before the next meeting, Hussain moved to authorize the chair to sign the contract with Davenport, pending approval of FRCOG and the engineer, and on the condition that the whole board was able to see it and none of the members requested a meeting for further discussion within one business day of receiving the contract. Bob seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Virginia said that the town had \$25,000 budgeted for the project for the current fiscal year. She asked whether there was a chance that work would be done before July 1 that would cost more than that amount. Will said he would set an effective start date of July 1 for the contract. He said it was unlikely that the engineer would cost more than the \$25,000 in the next month.

Moving on to King Corner, Will reiterated that the cost of the project was \$2.1 million and that he knew of no single source that could fund that amount. He noted that the Town had just applied for \$400,000 for the pre-cast bridge element and would apply for another phase the following year. It would not actually do anything until it was certain that more money was forthcoming. If there was no chance of enough money, the board would need to approach the State about the practicality of using such a large replacement span. He added that he and Lloyd were working on getting sign offs from abutters, including the DCR.

2. **The board reviewed the previous week's listening session about the Dugway.** Will reported that FRCOG had installed a traffic counter on Route 8A near Stetson Road and found an average of 280 vehicles per day, 18 percent of them heavy vehicles. The average speed was 40 miles per hour. Will said in general he was pleased with the discussion but was concerned that the session had come too late to apply for funds during the current grant cycle. He reiterated his hope that the Town could set aside funds for matching grants. Hussain suggested the traffic counts through the Dugway were probably higher, since a counter at Stetson Road would not register most of the traffic between West Hawley and Greenfield.

Hussain remarked that the discussion about the DOT's using the most recent Dugway plans in the event of an emergency had perhaps been unrealistic; permitting would be needed, for one thing. In a disaster, it was likely that the only work allowed, absent extensive permits, would be to restore the roadway to its condition immediately prior. He suggested it might be time to try to get some earmarks for the Dugway. He noted prior success in securing funding to repair Middle and Hunt Roads (another multi-million-dollar project) and noted the Dugway was far more significant in its impact. Tinky was asked to put strategizing about earmarks on a future agenda.

3. **The board made appointments for the next fiscal year, to begin on July 1.** (See attached lists.)

While discussing the Council on Aging appointments, Tinky noted that FRCOG and Lifepath had been in touch again about establishing some kind of Age- and Dementia-Community program. Hussain expressed concern that such programs could lead to more paperwork, and that Hawley hadn't been asked for a lot of services by its seniors. Tinky was asked to request a proposal from the FRCOG/Lifepath representatives.

4. **Tinky said she was getting ready to send out requests for fuel bids** and asked whether setting a deadline of July 2 would work. The board agreed. Gasoline would be added to the list this year, given the DPW's new truck.
5. **The board decided to designate Hussain the MBI Municipal Point of Contact.** While discussing MBI, Will noted that a second Gap funding program had been announced, with a tight deadline. Meanwhile, there was still no news about the first Gap program. He said that MBI had told him on May 8 that an announcement was forthcoming. He found the whole issue frustrating. Hussain offered to write to Paul Mark for clarification. His offer was gratefully accepted.

**In other business, Chris noted that the "roll call" of war dead in front of the Meeting House in East Hawley was falling apart.** Tinky was asked to get in touch with the Sons & Daughters to ask who might be responsible for fixing it.

**Hussain said he had a couple of emergency-services items to note.** First, he described a break in at the Fire Station on May 27. Nothing appeared to be missing, but the issue was still of concern, and everyone should be vigilant. He added that, on a recent 911 call, emergency-services personnel had encountered an address with no house number. Indeed, he said, a number of houses in town didn't have their numbers clearly marked, an omission that could have dire consequences in an emergency. Tinky said she would be happy to put something about this in the e-news. The e-news didn't reach everyone, however, so she was asked to coordinate with the tax collector about sending out a message with the next tax bill. Hussain said he would be happy to provide language she could draw on.

**The Board considered a letter from Dean and Maria Desmarais.** If the town would like, they had written, the couple would like to give the town a wood chipper, along with a truck and equipment steam cleaner. Gary said these pieces of equipment would be useful. Hussain moved to accept the donation, Bob seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. Tinky was asked to write to Dean and Maria to thank them for the donation.

**Tinky brought up an email from the Solid Waste District asking the town to endorse proposed legislation about paint disposal.** Hussain said he never supported legislative proposals without first reading them, Tinky was asked to put the matter on the next agenda.

**Tinky reported that dump stickers had arrived and asked whether the board would like to change the price.** Virginia noted that the town's assessment from Ashfield for dump use was unchanged. Hussain argued that keeping the price reasonable encouraged people to use the dump rather than resort to less savory methods of trash disposal. The Board agreed to retain the current price structure.

**Tinky reported that the Selectboard had been invited to the Hawley Bog Celebration on July 11.** Hussain said he would be happy to go.

**Tinky said that she had reached out to emergency services personnel about the proposal to donate the town's share of opioid money to the school system.** No objections had been received. She was asked to confirm this with Greg.

**Virginia said that on her way to work she had seen a growing number of unregistered vehicles.** She reminded the group that the number was officially limited to two per household. There was consensus that this was an issue where the Town hopes people will comply voluntarily.

There was mention of a cleanup in the past where a junk yard might have removed some vehicles for free. There was also discussion about donating cars to a public radio station; however those cars needed to be drivable. Tinky said she would put a note about Hawley's regulation about this in the tax bills as well.

**Will reported that FRCOG was giving a small amount of money back to member towns, always welcome news.**

There being no other immediate business, the meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Tinky Weisblat, Gal Friday

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Williams Cosby

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Hussain Hamdan

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Robert MacLean