

SHERWOOD GREENS ROAD IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE DISTRICT
413-274-2374

Prudential Committee Minutes for February 3, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 am.

In attendance were Committee members Terry Hayden, Marc Schultz, Joe Hanrahan, Bruce Lipton, Sharon Cutler

Also present were Bob Moore – Road Superintendent; Kathleen Borden – Treasurer; Jane Hanrahan, District Clerk

Residents present: Sandy Moore, Ken Einhorn, Ronnie Einhorn

The meeting was not recorded.

Terry thanked the group and expressed appreciation for everyone on the call.

Review of the January 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion made to approve the January Meeting Minutes by Marc and seconded by Bruce. The motion was approved by roll call.

Treasurer Report

Kathy was happy to report the collections for January were as she was expecting. The receipts for January were \$16,654.36, and the warrant is for \$1,229.89. Kathy expects more to be coming in through February. The bills have started to decrease; there is one small payment to Gary O'Brien for the winter contract, a bill from our attorney for the help with the Director's and Officer's Insurance, a bill from the town for the mailing of the tax bills, and a bill for our storage unit. This allows us to start building our account back up and savings for the spring clean-up.

The February Warrant will be signed via DocuSign.

Sharon made a motion, which Bruce seconded, to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call.

Roads Report

Bob reported that it was a pretty quiet month. A tree was down on Trail Circle, and a beaver took down a tree on Shuttlecock. The front entrance is a mess, and Gary is coming in on Monday to add some fill. It will cost \$1200.

Bruce made a motion, which Marc seconded, to approve the Roads Report.

The motion was approved unanimously by roll call.

Lakes Report

Bruce has written up all of the lake Management protocols and has sent them to Sharon and Jane. Bruce suggests that the Lake Management section of the board's responsibilities be divided into three parts: 1. Water & Wetlands and Aquatic Restorations 2. Beavers & Benthic mats 3. E.coli testing. Joe volunteered to take over the beaver management. Marc is handling the benthic mats.

There is a new provision in the Water & Wetlands (W&W) proposal regarding their participation in meetings and the cost. They will attend one Becket Conservation Committee meeting for free, and any others will incur a charge. We will also be charged for them to attend our Annual Meeting.

Sharon asked if this was a change from last year's proposal. Bruce explained that it was not a change. Last year there was no need to charge the District because they didn't attend any meetings. W&W did not need to defend their lake management plan to the Conservation Committee.

Another issue is the "fast test." The fast test is a sample of the water that needs to be collected before any bump treatment is performed on the lakes. It is typical for W&W's to come out and test on the day of the treatment. Ken Wagner has recommended that the fast test be done a week before because there is a chance that the water sample could be diluted and in a rainstorm. Ken has seen this before in Indian Lakes, which is not too far from us. There is a charge each time they come out, so if we do it ourselves, it will cost \$1200, and if they come to test, it will cost \$2400.

Bruce requested a decision today so that he can move forward with Water & Wetlands and Aquatic Restorations before the next season begins in May since there isn't a Prudential meeting held in March.

Ken asked about the frequency of treating the lakes. He recalls that treatments only needed to be done every four or five years. Bruce explained that the recommendations have changed from both Ken Wagner and Water & Wetlands.

The cost breakdown is:

Pre-season - \$1820.00

Treatment - \$14,319.00

Phragmites - \$2175.00

Year end report - \$850.00

2 days of cutting - \$5100.00

Fast Test - \$1200.00

Ken Wagner consulting fee - \$2000.00

The 1st test will be in late May or early June.

A motion was made for Bruce to move forward with the contract from Aquatic Restorations and the proposal from Water & Wetlands by Marc and Sharen seconded.

The motion was approved unanimously by roll call.

Bruce is going to contact Mike Callahan regarding the total cost for the replacement equipment for the beavers and to get a rundown on the Massachusetts requirements. Bruce estimated the cost for this would be approximately \$3000.

A motion to approve the contract with Beaver Solutions for their routine maintenance by Bruce and seconded by Marc.

The motion was approved unanimously by roll call.

Bruce ended his report with a reminder that we will need to make a decision about cutting at the end of the season.

A motion to accept the Lakes Report was made by Marc and seconded by Sharon.

The motion was approved unanimously by roll call.

Additional Business

Terry sent the final Directors and Officers Insurance Policy. It will cost roughly \$1900. If there are any questions, Terry requested that you email her and she will present them all at once to the agent and our attorney.

The Becket Conservation Commission sent letters for illegal tree removal. We had two property owners that the letters went to and unfortunately one letter was sent to the former owners of a property. Terry let Nick know and he resent the letter. Dr. Lawrence's old house which was bought by Black Bear had permission to remove the trees on that property. They are required to replace some of the trees, which they will do in the spring.

Terry reached out to Ira because we've sent him two letters and an email. Terry alerted him that there was a problem with the culvert and that water is backing up onto the neighbor's property. The problem has not impacted the roads yet, but should it become a problem we will be in contact with him as well. We have our records of communication and the emails that have been sent. So if there should be an issue that we have to raise legally, no one can say they didn't know about it.

An owner contacted Terry about donating his property on Trail Circle to SGRD as he has been unable to sell it due to the unfinished construction across the street. Terry found out that as a road district, we can accept donations and our attorney would be willing to make sure that the deed was properly transferred. However, when Terry went back to the gentleman and told him

that we could accept a donation, his realtor, of course, had another buyer. We would prefer a buyer because it increases our tax receipts.

Terry shared the response from our attorney regarding language for the signs shared with you the email response from our attorney, where she advises the language to be use on the signs for the lakes. Our attorney also said that we are a legal entity and all of us on the board are not open to lawsuits.

Sharon did a lot of research regarding the beavers. Sharon reported that there are benefits to having beavers for the environment. There are conflicts with landowners and tolerance is the best solution. The second-best solution is enclosures, which is putting fencing around the actual trees. Another solution was water flow devices, which I believe we already have. The last solution is trapping. It is legal to trap. They can be trapped between November 1st and April 15th. No permit is needed if a licensed trapper is doing the trapper trapping during that time.

It is illegal to relocate the animals, so they do have to be euthanized. It is effective. It is illegal to remove the actual beaver dams. If we get rid of the beavers that we now have living with us now, new beavers could move in during the springtime. So it's certainly not a permanent solution. Beavers do have benefits to the area. They take care of some weeds and things.

Sharon contacted three licensed trappers and two returned her call. The first gave her an estimate of a 10-day treatment between \$1500 and \$2500 for 10 days' worth of trapping and checking the traps. Permission would be needed from every person on the lake because he said he may end up having to move the traps and he didn't want to have to stop and ask for permission from every person on the lake. So that's a long, expensive process.

The second trapper (Tim from East Lee Animal Control) said he would only need permission from the property owners on which the traps were put. Sharon sent his proposal to everyone via email. His proposal was \$150 per animal removed, plus \$59 a day to check the traps. He said that once he takes the traps away, he will return for free within 30 days to reset the traps if we see any more beavers after we think we've got them all.

His suggestion is all of them, probably less than \$1,000. A week's worth at \$159 or \$150 per animal with \$59 per day. I got 570 and changed. So, you know, if there was more than one animal or it took more than a week, it would probably cost \$1000.

Joe asked if we could set the traps depending on the damage we see at each lake. On Silver Shield, we have seen four trees down within a week and a half.

Marc shared that they have taken down several trees around the lake and a good amount in the woods.

Sandy asked if we could have them come and look at the lakes and see how extensive the problem is. Sharon shared that an inspection would be the first step and the charge for the inspection is \$159.

Ronnie shared that she has been observing the beavers for 20 years and that is against removing them unless they are doing horrible damage. She can tell from how the lodges are built that there are different beavers year to year.

Joe shared that he would also prefer not to trap the beavers, but there has been an ecological impact, and he is happy to share the damage they have done on Silver Shield that he has documented with photos.

Marc shared that watching the beavers is fascinating, but we need to have a balance.

Sharon suggested that we spend the \$159 to have Tim the Trapper come and give us his appraisal of the situation and what I strongly suggest is that since I don't think we're going to make the April 15th timeline, we find a time for Tim to come when interested property owners can be present.

A motion was made to spend \$159 and have Tim from East Lee Animal Control come and give us his appraisal of the beaver situation by Sharon and seconded by Marc.

The motion was approved unanimously by roll call.

Sharon added that trapping can occur after April 15th legally, you just need a permit. Bruce added that it is illegal to remove a beaver lodge and that there is a difference between a beaver lodge and a beaver dam.

Marc made a motion, which Bruce seconded, to end the meeting.

The motion was approved unanimously by roll call.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:24 am
Respectfully submitted,
Jane Hanrahan
District Clerk

Documents discussed at this meeting:
FY24 Budget
FY 24-8 Warrant

