

BAKER HILL ROAD DISTRICT
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE
WILLIAM PRENDERGAST, CHAIR

20 Bridge Street, Lanesborough, MA
October 9, 2024

Attending: William Prendergast (Chairman), Hank Sayers, Linda Pruyne (Treasurer), Mark Siegars (Attorney), Lorna Gayle (Secretary)

Also Attending: Charles Durfee (Director, DPW), Seth Jenkins (BRPC),

Meeting called to order: 12:01 PM

Public Comment: None forthcoming

Minutes

Minutes for August 14, 2024 Motion to approve moved by Mr. Sayers, seconded by Mr. Prendergast. All in favor.

Minutes for September 11, 2024. Motion to approve moved by Mr. Sayers, seconded by Mr. Prendergast. All in favor.

Road Maintenance

Mr. Durfee reported that the road had been patrolled, and the birches. Mr. Prendergast was concerned about are scheduled to be cut.

The Committee discussed the construction being carried out by the state at the Route 7 entrance to the connector road. Mr. Siegars asked if it was possible to speak to Balthazar about doing additional milling. Mr. Siegars and Mr. Prendergast also discussed the end of the guardrail area and the need for better signage.

Mr. Durfee reported that the plow being repaired at Zack's in Stephentown is only waiting for the Controller.

Legal Issues

Mr. Siegars reported his conversation with Gina Dario regarding BHRD desire to speak with the Select Board about the situation with the Mall.

Mr. Siegars reported receiving a one-hour video of the inside of the Mall shot with drones. He had not reviewed it yet. He reported that there had been homeless people at the Mall. They were removed.

In regard to the scheduled meeting with the Finance Committee, Mr. Siegars anticipated that their discussion would be on some revision of the BHRD contract with the town in particular the financial contributions required for the fire department and ambulance services. Mr. Siegars provided the historical context and rationale for the current contract's \$50,000 contribution to the Fire Department. The Committee has a brief discussion.

Board Member Issues

Ms. Pruyne discussed the financial constraints faced by the BHRD in light of the Mall owner's failure to pay their taxes. Mr. Prendergast voiced deep concern about the financial impact of their failure to pay on the public services supported by BHRD.

Mr. Siegars suggested scheduling a special meeting with the Select Board to discuss the Mall's financial responsibilities to BHRD and the Town. The Committee explored the feasibility of inviting the Mall owners to a public meeting to address their plans for the property. Mr. Siegars will follow up with the Town Administrator to set the meeting date.

The group, including Mr. Jenkins, from Berkshire Regional Planning, discussed the best approach to engage the public and the Mall owners. The group considered various approaches. Mr. Jenkins suggested that the Committee Members attend the scheduled meeting to present the results of the Master Plan survey to the Town. He felt this would provide a platform to speak with the Town residents directly about the anticipated impact on the town services funded by BHRD. The Committee agreed to attend.

In anticipation for the Financial Committee meeting, the proposed Select Board meeting and the Master Plan Survey meeting Mr. Siegars suggested that the Committee schedule a series of meetings to finalize their strategy. The Committee and Mr. Jenkins strongly agreed that support by the Community is critical going forward,

Motion to Adjourn the meeting moved by Mr. Sayers, seconded by Mr. Prendergast . All in favor.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:04 PM

Future Meeting: November 13, 2024 at 12 PM. Water District Office, Bridge Street.