



Emerald Lake Village District (ELVD)

Office: 147 West Main Street, Hillsborough, NH 03244

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Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Meeting

Thursday, December 7, 2023 @ 6:30 PM

Location: Main office

Board Attendees

Brett Taber, Commissioner

Michael Carr, Commissioner

Carolyn Renken, Treasurer

Public Attendees

Melissa Taber

Karen Zerofski

Joanne Staples

Matthew R. Cook

Public Comment

- Karen Zerofski discuss lots that are abutting her property and would like to know if she can purchase one of the lots
 - The parcel is Map: 000015 Lot: 000035
 - Karen noted that she has concerns regarding trees on the parcel potentially damaging her house
 - Brett Taber stated that generally when we obtain a property for water source protection, there is a specific set-back required
 - The ELVD would need to research if the property was gifted with a certain criteria or is required to be kept for source water protection
 - Additionally, there is the possibility that the land would need to be offered to the public as a whole if a sale was to occur
 - Brett will try to get answers for next month

- Joanne Staples would like to know if the district is currently paying \$500 per month for rent lot 248 at the corner of Gould Pond Rd and Ellen Brook Rd
 - Brett confirmed that is the case
 - Joanne asked if that is bringing the district over budget, and what budget line would that come from
 - Brett stated that it will likely come out of the “Contract” line, and that we will need to assess if there will be any overages
 - Costs in January will be part of next year's budget
 - Starting next Thursday 12/14/23 there will be budget prep meetings
- Joanne Staples indicated that the winter plowing contract was a large sum compared to the previous road agent, and that she didn't see local advertising for road maintenance
 - Brett noted that the board was informed that the road agent would not be returning late into October, and that the board agreed to focus specifically on winter work as an immediate need
 - Advertisements for a road agent to cover the rest of the year will begin in the new year, and it is likely that a new road agent would start around March
 - Joanne asked if the current winter road agent contract would end in March
 - Brett stated that the spring portion of the contract is flexible
 - Michael Carr noted that the contract language discusses winter road work occurring from first snow until last snow
- Joanne Staples asked for a tentative date for the annual meeting
 - Brett stated that the meeting would likely occur in the 3rd or 4th week of April, but this will need to be confirmed in a meeting with the district's Moderator
- Karen Zerofski would like clarification on what lot the district is paying \$500 /month for
 - Brett stated that it is the Edward's lot, and that Mrs. Edwards has always allowed for free use of the lot but is not, understandably, asking for a rental usage fee
 - Access to this particular lot is highly beneficial for the district given its strategic location for road work

Board of Commissioners Business

- Discuss Open Position - District Clerk
 - Brett is not aware of any applicants for the open Clerk position
 - Michael is not aware of any either
 - Brett noted that the district will continue to advertise for the position
- Drinking Water and GroundWater Trust Fund Application
 - Brett discussed that the district has applied for grant money as part of the water infrastructure replacement, with an additional \$300k awarded pending the annual meeting
 - Due to our median household income (determined by the anonymous income surveys done in the district), we qualify for up to 80% loan forgiveness and could see \$800k to \$1M forgiven
 - The district has been approved for \$1.3M in grants and loans which will be presented at the annual meeting

- Joanne Staples asked how many roads will be left after completing the next round of work on the water infrastructure
 - Brett noted that 10 to 15 roads would be remaining
 - A lot of work has been completed
 - Melissa Taber stated that is hard to believe that many roads will be left
 - Brett noted that there are 30 roads in the district and that all repairs and work occur 6 feet down in the roads
- Joanne Staples asked if this is a proactive attempt to fix the plumbing
 - Brett stated that the infrastructure is 70+ years old, and had an estimated life expectancy of 40 to 50 years
 - Historically, millions of gallons have been lost due to leaks and we are currently greatly reducing that water loss
 - Brett continued on to state that past budgets never put away money for future repairs, but the district has received over \$4M in grants over the last few years
 - Simultaneously, asset management is occurring in conjunction with the state to look 5/10/15 years into the future
- Joanne questioned if this work could lead to hookup with Henniker's water system
 - Brett stated that this scenario was part of the 2019 review, and that connection to Hillsboro was a suggestion, which was projected at \$3-6M to make the connection, and the ELVD would be required to pay for all of the work
 - Past cost estimates have shown that paying to fully supply the district with water from the town would exceed our total annual operating budget
 - Michael Carr stated that the \$3-6M to connect is not including the over \$4M that we have been utilizing just to repair our existing system, which would need to be done either way
 - Brett noted that as the district water lines are repaired, the residential connections will become the weakest links in the system, and residents would be responsible for seeing to those repairs or upgrades as needed
 - Brett also noted that the State of NH is currently doing a survey to determine how much lead and copper piping is in district's water system, and that potential funding could come from this to help residents work on their own water lines
 - The inventory is expected to be completed by October 2024
- Joanne asked where money that the residents pay for the Water Warrant goes
 - Brett informed that residents pay the twice annual "water bill" to the town of Hillsboro and then the money comes to the district on a monthly basis
 - The town does not retain any of the money for themselves
 - Brett noted that the district residents themselves voted to establish the Emerald Lake Village District from ELPOA (the Emerald Lake Property Owners Association)
- Karen Zerofski asked if the annual meeting is April is to determine our 2025 operating budget

- Brett clarified that the meeting is to establish to 2024 operating budget, and that this budget timing/structure is the same as the town and the state
 - Brett noted that there is a portion of the budget that goes into an escrow account that the district is slowly rebuilding for costs as needed
 - Karen Zerofski would like to know if we have any information on what the cause of the most recent tax increase was from the town
 - Brett stated that all he is aware of is that the school budget was increased and that the increase was approved of by the voters at the town's budget last year
 - Other Project Updates
 - Brett stated that the district is involved in the final reviews for multiple projects
 - NHDES has notified us that the ELVD is no longer in violation for arsenic levels
 - Source Capacity and issues from the Sanitary Survey are still in violation
 - The district is continuing its research into residential metering
 - Wright Pierce is working on the drinking water asset management
 - the StormWater asset management is set to be completed next year
 - Drawings/schematics have been submitted for the Patten Hill project
 - Aquamen is getting ready to begin pilot testing on Eastman well this winter
 - At least 50% of the materials are on hand
 - Everything should have arrived within 15-30 days
 - The pilot testing will begin this winter as the winter months are our window of opportunity due to low water usage
 - The pilot testing equipment will be accumulated and built on site
 - Office Computer Repair Update
 - Michael Carr stated that the non-functional office computer was taken in to Best Buy for work
 - The Geek Squad technician was able to identify a malfunction that was rendering the computer inoperable, but was unable to fully diagnose it
 - The computer is still under warranty and can be replaced at no charge
 - Prior to replacing the computer, a back-up would need to occur which would cost \$99
 - Brett indicated that we still need to talk to Robert regarding what data is needed on the computer and we should also determine the timeline in which a decision regarding replacement must be made
 - Michael will schedule an appointment with Geek Squad as soon as possible, and would like to come to an agreement on backing up the computer now
 - Michael Carr makes a motion to approve up to \$150 to backup the data on the computer
 - Brett Taber seconds the motion - All are in favor - Motion passes
 - Approve November 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes
 - No amendments suggested for minutes
 - Brett Taber makes a motion to approved the minutes
 - Michael Carr seconds the motion - All are in favor - Motion passes

- Water Warrant Abatements
 - Brett notes 3 properties paid their Water Warrants prior to receiving abatements
 - Michael questioned how much the reimbursements would be
 - Brett states that they would be \$299 each
 - Brett Taber makes a motion to submit those 3 properties for reimbursement
 - Michael Carr seconds the motion - All are in favor - Motion passes
 - A new property needs to be added to the list of properties that receive abatements
 - This new property is on Sunrise Place
 - Brett Taber makes a motion to add this property to the abatement list
 - Michael Carr seconds the motion - All are in favor - Motion passes
 - Michael clarifies that they had not yet paid their water warrant
- Drinking Water Asset Management
 - Numerous grant reimbursements need to be submitted to the State of NH
 - Brett Taber makes a motion to submit reimbursement request for \$40,946.06
 - Michael Carr seconds the motion - All are in favor - Motion passes
 - Brett Taber makes a motion to submit reimbursement request for \$33,087.22 to the state
 - Michael Carr seconds the motion - All are in favor - Motion passes
 - Brett Taber makes a motion to submit reimbursement request for \$17,475.18 of the strategic planning grant to the state
 - Michael Carr seconds the motion - All are in favor - Motion passes
 - Brett Taber makes a motion to submit \$9,680.50 for the Patten Hill Well Improvement project
 - Michael Carr seconds the motion - All are in favor - Motion passes
 - Brett Taber makes a motion to submit \$17,280 for the Clean Water Stormwater project
 - Michael Carr seconds the motion - All are in favor - Motion passes
 - Brett notes that we need to approve if there are an invoices being carried over into the new year
 - Brett notes that we have an invoice currently for heating repair
 - Carolyn Renken asks if we have an invoices from Wright Pierce
 - Brett states that we do not
 - Carolyn Renken states that she is not aware of any others
 - Brett states that we will need to finalize this information before 12/15/23
 - Brett notes that the last meeting for capital reserves is 12/28/23
- Adjourn Meeting
 - Brett Taber makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30pm
 - Michael Carr seconds the motion - All are in favor - Motion passes

Sara Auger, Commissioner, Chair

Date

Brett Taber, Commissioner

Date

Michael Carr, Commissioner

Date

Respectfully submitted by Michael Carr, Commissioner