

**HYDE PARK ROADS COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
June 23, 2014**

*All minutes are draft until approved by the Committee;  
please check future minutes for approval of these minutes.*

**Members Present:** Brian Jones, Greg Paus, Troy Hayford, Mike Dubie, Jim Heath  
**Members Absent:** None  
**Others Present:** Ron Rodjenski, Town Administrator; Jeff Beattie (Benson Road); and the following Diggins Road Landowners: Jim Fontaine, Rick Fearing, Corey Hathaway, Analou Hathaway, Sulvan Hathaway, and Eliana Hathaway

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Ron called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

1. **Welcome and Introductions** – Public Comment – Rick Fearing reviewed the history of Diggins Road. Mr. Fearing stated that he has no issues with the town plow stopping at the top of the hill near the Rob Alvino driveway (just past the fire pond), noting that the town has been plowing this portion of the Class 4 road for the last 20 years however, little summer maintenance is done except grading once in a while. Ron noted that the Class 3 portion of Diggins Road is mapped and ends at a point 0.22 miles from McKinstry Hill Road then the Class 4 section begins, ending in the Green River Reservoir State Park. Mr. Fearing noted that former Road Commissioner Ken Harvey offered to plow the Class 4 section for Ray Chauvin (now Alvino) if there were improvements made to the Class 4 section but only if the town had no issues with plowing it. Mr. Fearing stated that the improvements were done to the road, but the town has only done culvert and ditching work since that time. Mike Dubie stated that the improvements were not done to town road specifications and that grading of the road is not done regularly because there is very little gravel to grade. Mr. Fearing stated that it takes about one hour to grade the Class 4 section and it should be done 3 or 4 times per year. Corey Hathaway agreed with others that a school bus should not go to the Alvino driveway due to the steep grade and narrow Class 4 section. Mr. Fearing stated that at one point, a letter went out to neighbors stating that the Class 4 section would not be plowed and the neighbors complained, so the town continued to plow. Mike Dubie noted that there would be substantial costs to upgrade the road to Class 3 condition. General discussion about options and Jim Heath pointed out that this committee would only be making recommendations to the Selectboard.
2. **Private Road Memo** – The committee agreed to forward the memo to the Selectboard and Jim Heath offered to attend the July 10 Selectboard meeting to answer any questions from the Selectboard. Rodjenski noted that in addition to road sections that are being discussed, there is a town-wide issue of not have right-of-way for proper turnarounds at a number of locations. The Committee would like to see new road signs have “PVT” if they are private, which is not being done on all road name signs. The members briefly discussed their site visits to roads and agreed that any recommendations to the Selectboard should be consistent for each situation and not try to have different recommendations for each road.
3. **Next Tasks** – On June 27, the private road memo will go to the Selectboard with the main question being whether the Selectboard wants to pursue making them legal roads. Jim Heath suggested that if the board wants to continue maintaining private roads, then the landowners be presented with an option; work out the legal issues and costs with the town, or the town would stop maintenance. Dick Grogan sent in an email stating that in Stowe they found that maintaining private roads may result in acceptance of substandard roads. The costs of upgrading substandard roads would then be on all town taxpayers and going on private property raises liability on landowners and the town should there be injuries on “private property”. The committee felt it was important to get a handle on liability and legal issues as soon as possible. The next task is to review each road segment in town not in the Private Road Memo and discuss whether or not it is operating efficiently based on costs and public benefit. A template needs to be created to summarize the existing uses on the road, tax revenues generated by the

development, and the road's maintenance costs. This information would then be summarized in order to develop recommendations for the Selectboard. Options for changes in current road maintenance practices include, reclassifying Class 3 to Class 4 (resulting in no winter maintenance), upgrading deficient roads to Class 3 standards (safe turnarounds and good depth of gravel, etc.) or discontinuing road sections and returning the land to abutting property owners.

4. Minutes – Motion by Jim Heath to approve the 05-12-2014 minutes, as written. Seconded by Troy Hayford. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
5. **Other Business** – Rodjenski quickly reviewed issues related to road maintenance and acceptance, using Locke Ave as an example. That acceptance process, which took a number of years, clarified the various issues extending beyond plowing and culverts - such as who is responsible for compliance with state stormwater rules, town liability insurance, surveying costs and the new town road "General Permit" which will be required in the near future. Brian Jones noted his dad voted no on plowing Diggins Road when he was on the Selectboard because it was not built to specification.
6. **Next Meeting** – July 14, 2014 at 4:30 p.m.
7. **Adjourn** – Motion by JH to adjourn. Seconded by GP. So voted at 5:45 p.m.