

**HYDE PARK ROADS COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
September 8, 2014**

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

**Members Present:** Greg Paus, Jim Heath, Mike Dubie  
**Members Absent:** Brian Jones, Troy Hayford  
**Others Present:** Ron Rodjenski, Town Administrator; Interested persons regarding Diggins Road: Jim Fontaine, Corey Hathaway, Tyler Maynard, Deb Burnor, Pall Spera, Rob Alvino and Rick Fearing

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Greg opened the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

1. **Road Categories and Public Benefit Discussion** – The committee reviewed the new matrix of the roads in question showing lengths of roads and tax revenues, etc. – e.g. class 4's receiving plowing and Class 3's not maintained – and no revisions were made.
2. **Policies** – The committee discussed the lack of a town policy to address the various situations in the matrix.
  - a. **Class Four Policy** - Troy Hayford was not present but provided an email supporting the adoption of clear policy, such as the one adopted by the Town of Rockingham. Corey Hathaway asked why Rockingham was selected and Rodjenski stated that it was just two examples of a Class 4 policy and there were many more to review if the Town pursues one for Hyde Park.
  - b. **State Road and Bridge Standards** - Jim Heath asked about the current town road standards and Rodjenski clarified that the Town has adopted the 2011 State Road and Bridge Standards for town highways, but has not adopted the new 2013 State Road and Bridge Standards due to the Selectboards concern for regular amendments to the policy that continue to increase the town's roan maintenance costs. Costs increase due to the need to provide more stone, rent or buy larger equipment and install larger culverts, but there is no increased state funding support, except for some increase in grant funds from a lower local grant match. Rodjenski confirmed that while the newer standards are more costly, possibly in the range of 25% or more, but they are designed to improve water quality and better withstand storm events. The committee agreed that the Selectboard should understand the increasing costs better before adopting the 2013 Standards. Rodjenski noted that the Town may be required to follow the current state standards if towns are required to meet the conditions of a proposed "General Permit" for any work on town highways.
  - c. **Private Road Maintenance** – Jim Heath reported that he attended the Selectboard meeting and encouraged the Board to stop maintaining private roads but no action has been taken. He recommends, not for the full committee, but himself, that the Town should discontinue the roads to clear up any confusion about their history and then wait for the landowners to meet the requirements of the 2012 Town of Hyde Park Road Acceptance Policy.
  - d. **VLCT Road Policy** – Jim Fontaine advised that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns has a template policy for use by towns.
  - e. **Diggins Road** – Pall Spera asked if the town received state aid for Diggins Road to which Greg Paus responded that only the 0.22 mile portion of Class received the \$1,500 per mile aid from the State; Class 4 roads receive no aid. Jim Fontaine pointed out that State Law provides that the Selectboard may perform drainage work on Class 4 in consideration of public need and benefit. Rodjenski pointed out that Class 3 roads are required to be maintained to a higher standard in most situations,

however recent Vermont Supreme Court decisions have seemed to provide for some “may maintain” options in limited situations. Rick Fearing asked that the road crew grade the Class 4 section before snow flies. Jim Heath suggested that due to the late time in the year to plan on winter maintenance, the Selectboard should continue all practices done on town highways as was done last year, but for only one more winter, as the various road issues are reviewed by this Committee and the Selectboard. Mike Dubie stated that the highway crew was in limbo and did not know whether they were supposed to plow the Class 4 portion or not this coming winter. Pall Spera wanted to know if neighbors could barter with the town to get upgrades done, possibly paying for a portion of the Class 3 upgrade costs. Greg Paus advised the neighbors that they should meet with the Selectboard to ask that winter maintenance be confirmed for the 2014-2015 winter. Jim Fontaine asked if Diggins Road could be grand-fathered to a lower road standard and allowing Class 3 designation at a lower cost. Corey Hathaway stated that the width of the road is close. Rob Alvino pointed out that a significant amount of road traffic on the Class 4 is from State Park visitors and internet maps send people to Diggins Road. Rob Alvino asked about gating the Class 4 road to reduce traffic and the committee felt that would not be a good option since Class 4 roads can't be gated and locked for just the landowners use. Rob Alvino asked about asking the State for funding assistance to upgrade the Class 4 and Mike Dubie reported that the State won't fund similar town requests for Class 3 roads, so it is probably just as unlikely for a Class 4 road.

- f. **Kusserow Development** – Jim Fontaine stated that in his review of the Kusserow subdivision permit process, it appeared the applicant and the DRB assumed the new private road was entering a Class 3 town highway, but it was not, since the intersection is with a Class 4 town highway. Rob Alvino stated that his engineer estimated the cost of upgrading the Class 4 portion to be reclassified a town highway Class 3 road was \$88,000.
3. **Next Steps** – Jim Heath summarized by stating that the next two actions by the town should be:
    - a. The Selectboard should stop maintaining private roads immediately and allow landowners on private roads to follow the policy to be designated as town highways.
    - b. A new policy should be adopted to address the various town road maintenance issues before any changes occur in plowing, grading, etc. of town highway right-of-ways – whether Class 4 plowing or Class 3 to one home.
  4. **Other Business** – None.
  5. **Next Meeting** – October 13, 2014 at 4:30 p.m.
  6. **Adjourn** – The committee adjourned without objection at 5:30 p.m.