

Town of Old Lyme
Special Meeting: Snow Plowing Committee
Thursday January 11, 2011; 7:30 pm

Present: Ed Amanti, David Flagge, Chris Kerr, Rich Kingston, Paul Puddingdon, Bonnie Reemsnyder, Beth Sullivan, Bob Vanesse, Paul Yellen,

Regrets: Cindy Hautaniemi

Meeting called to order at 7:30 by Paul Yellen.

Additions/Changes to the agenda

None

Approval of minutes

Motion made by Rich Kingston, seconded by Bob Vanesse, and passed unanimously to accept the minutes as submitted.

Business:

David Flagge marked all the private roads on the town map.

~10 miles of private roads (not including the beach areas)

~12 miles of private roads in beach areas

~60 miles of town public roads

Chris Kerr clarified the current road designations (private roads and public roads) and the maintenance of each: private roads per association, and public roads per town.

Beth Sullivan stated that we need to remember that we are all part of the same town. Often situations come down to town vs. beach community and we should try not to go down that same path. We need to approach this topic as a whole/one town.

Discussion regarding if town private roads are the same as beach community private roads. Rich Kingston pointed out that with the previous 'seasonal' designation of the area, the owners in the beach communities paid the same town taxes, but were not able to send their family to the school district as they were not allowed to live in their homes all year. There was a discussion regarding the amount of money the town 'gives back' to the beach communities and the purpose of this money being given back. There was not a clear understanding of the purpose of this money, but that it has been in the town budget for many years. Rich Kingston thought it was provided to assist the beach communities with garbage collection, security, insurance, etc. He thought the money was given in part to offset the association dues. Beth Sullivan pointed out that the town does not give any money to other associations to help offset association dues.

Bob Vanesse stated that some towns (e.g., South Windsor) do 'pay back' to associations to assist with the plowing.

Paul Puddingdon questioned the cost per mile should be clarified – this money could be then given back to associations with private roads.

Ed Adanti pointed out that the town provides sand to the local private snow plow contractors.

David Flagge stated that this is a very sensitive issue. He understands that the beach communities that have been plowed 'as a courtesy' do not want this service taken away.

Ed Adanti wondered who would clean up the sand from the private roads if the town plowed them. He stated that the current plowing of the beach communities roads add up to a lot of time. He estimated approximately 6 hours is needed.

Committee discussed various options for how to proceed: continue to do what is being done using the past practice as the standard, or establish 'standards' to be applied to all private roads for the town to consider plowing.

Action Item: Paul Yellen said he would try to research the Plainfield Ct lawsuit regarding snow plowing, as the legal implications of changing this may need to be considered when deciding.

It was pointed out that Deer Ridge, Tisbury, and Thomas Waite (to name a few) are private roads that the town did plow in the past, but stopped plowing. It was questioned as to is this any different than not continuing to plow in the beach community?

Bonnie clarified the purpose of this committee: to discuss and decide on an option (options) to be presented to the Board of Selectmen, which will then be presented to the Board of Finance. If considering recommending private roads to be plowed by the town, the committee standards for these roads does not need to be the same as the town standards for a road to be a town road, but such standards should be fair to impose on all private roads. With this in mind, several options were listed. (**see table) Once options clarified, the legal implications will need to be considered – and then it would be appropriate to have the town lawyer invited for input, and the financial implications would also need to be considered.

	Option	Legal Implication	Financial Implication	Miscellaneous
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town plows town roads Town plows beach communities as it has done in the past (a) 	Precedence set for plowing in past?	None to current budget	What about other private roads that were once plowed by the town?
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town plows town roads Town plows beach communities as it has done in the past Town plows private roads per cmte standards * 		Would ↑ budget least amount of options	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town plows town roads Town plows private roads per cmte standards 		Would increase budget – would include some beach and some town private roads, not sure of total number or \$ impact	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town plows all roads, town and private 		Would have greatest increase on budget	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town plows town roads only (no private roads) 		Would decrease town budget	

(a) Town plows these roads only after town roads are plowed and only for 2+ inches of snow. Town does not salt the beach area roads.

* Draft Committee Standards for private roads to be plowed by town:

- Paved (not dirt or gravel)
- Need turn around at end for truck
- No speed bumps
- Minimum width (specific width not yet determined)
- Edges of road trimmed of brush / no overhanging of brush
- No on-street parking
- No unreasonable grade, sharp turn, or deep ditches on edge of road but ok if guard rail between road and ditch (percent grade or angle of sharp turn not yet determined)
- Other?

Ed Adanti questioned if the committee standards are applied to all private roads in town, how many roads would meet this standard.

Action Item: David Flagge and Ed Adanti to look into the cost of private contractors being hired to meet any additional needs, e.g., additional private roads that meet committee standards to be plowed by the town.

Miscellaneous thoughts/comments to keep in mind:

- All Old Lyme residents pay the same mill rate for taxes regardless if on a private or public road.
- The beach communities have different situations to recognize
 - Sound View is an OL public road
 - White Sands Beach Community is private community, but has an easement to the town to allow OL residents access to the beach.
 - Point of Woods Community owns a plow and sand truck capable

Public Comment

Tom Murphy (Thomas Waite Rd.) stated that Cedar Hollow may present issues. He asked the committee members to put aside own agenda and think of the town as a whole.

Robert Gunn (Long Acre Rd.) stated that his road is 1/10 paved, and the rest is not paved. He stated that in the past when he lived in the Hatchetts Point area, and again while living on Long Acre, the town has assisted the private snow plow contractors when needed and asked. He asked the town to please continue to respond to special requests as it has done.

Mary Jo Nosal acknowledged that this was a tough meeting, and the committee has a tough assignment. She stated that she is impressed that the members keep returning to the charge of the meeting. She thanked the committee as it will help the Board of Selectmen to address this issue and maybe use a similar approach for other issues in the future.

Next meeting: Wednesday January 18, 2012 @ 7:30 pm in Town Hall (upstairs.)

Motion made by David Flagge, seconded by Paul Puddingdon and passed unanimously to adjourn at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Sullivan