DPW - COMMITTEE

Monday, May 18, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Clayton Barber, Chairperson
Chris Clark, Vice-Chairperson

Chairman Barber called this DPW Meeting to order at 9:30 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Matthew Brassard, Chris Clark, Mary Lamphear, Steve McNally, Clayton Menser, Timothy Pierce, Richard Preston, Cathleen Reusser, Matt Stanley, Davina Thurston, Ike Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson and Margaret Wood. Timothy Follos, Ken Hughes, Tracie McGill and James O'Bryan were excused.

Department Heads present: Doreen Abrahamsen, Judy Garrison, Michael Mascarenas, Roy Holzer and Jim Dougan.

Also present: Alice Halloran, Buildings & Grounds staff – Josh Meachem, Alan Arno, Joel Morris, Chris Gregory, Owen Nephew, Jaime Crandall and Cameron White.

BARBER: I will call this DPW meeting to order. Please stand for the pledge. Mr. Dougan. Good morning. Where would you like to start sir?

DOUGAN: Well I a little shorter agenda. I only have three resolutions which I know you guys are used to seeing more than that from me but I'll try to make up for it next month.

MASCARENAS: I'm fine.

DOUGAN: You're fine with that? Those of you that attending the buildings facilities committee meeting over the last few months you heard us talk a lot about work that we've been able to do in house with buildings and grounds staff so I asked our guys that are located right here to stop by so this board could see who those people are, put a name to a face. They've been working hard on the building next door probation. We are almost complete. Furniture is supposed to be delivered next week if you guys want to wander through in between meetings and take a look at what they've done. They've done most of the work. We did use a contractor to finish the dry wall. We did hire a contractor to put the carpet down and to install the ceiling grid but all the rest of the work that's done there especially if you go upstairs and look at the condition that it's in right now and compare it to the space that we've just got done it's done by these guys right here so I'm just going to ask them to each stand up or tip their hat so you know their name is all so, Josh Meachem, Chris Gregory, Owen Nephew, Al Arno, Jaime Crandall, Joel Morris and Cameron White. So along with managing all the maintenance calls we get on 358,000 square feet of space, one hundred fourteen of it is up at the public safety building and at some point I hope you guys meet a few individuals we have up there but these guys are doing some good work while juggling maintenance and lawn mowing and snow plowing and toilet overflows all those other things so I just wanted you to have a chance to meet them that's all.

REUSSER: I'm not on this committee but I would like to say, that I worked with several of these guys and a lot of them since they were quite young guys and the growth that I've seen and the things that they do for their careers is amazing and where they are and what they are teaching the younger crew. They are such a great value to Essex County and proud to work with several of them.

STANLEY: I would just like to say, just as buildings are assets to the county our staff is an asset

to the county as well and without you guys doing the work you do we would not be able to keep our buildings and the cost to maintain those buildings down so it's notable for those reasons I know myself and I know this board, we appreciate what you guys do and thank you very much for everything that goes on.

BARBER: So, being the head of this department I'd like to pass a resolution of appreciation for the whole department on behalf of this board. Unanimous second, thank you.

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO THE ESSEX COUNTY BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS STAFF. Barber, unanimous

DOUGAN: Thank you.

BARBER: Thank you guys. Very much appreciated.

DOUGAN: These guys are all coming along well. They are really trying to do projects instead of just me so thank you.
If we can go right to resolutions – I have three written here and I may have one more. The first one is requesting a contract amendment with SRA Engineers. It's in the amount of $7,660.00. That is for a geomorphic evaluation for the Fisk Road over McKenzie Brook culvert replacement project. US Fish & Wildlife is funding the design of two projects for us, funding it completely but when you work with an organization like there are certain extra steps they want you to do so geomorphic evaluation is geo – earth, morphic is change right so it's the study of how that particular stream changes the earth around it so we're going to be – it's fairly extensive document when they are all done but it's to make sure overall that's a resilient structure and that structure that we put in also it allows sediment to move down through that area like it naturally would if there wasn't a structure there and it's also looking to make sure that structure isn't causing a change in the earth that therefore causes harm to the fish and the wildlife that are in there. It's all coming from US Fish and Wildlife funds.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN OR COUNTY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT AMENDMENT WITH SRA ENGINEERS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $7,660.00, TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES INCLUDING GEOMORPHIC EVALUATION FOR THE FISK ROAD OVER MCKENZIE BROOK CULVERT REPLACMENT PROJECT LOCATED IN THE TOWN OF MORIAH, WITH FUNDS TO COME FROM US FISH & WILDLIFE FUNDS. Clark, Menser

BARBER: Any questions, concerns?

THURSTON: I'm not on this committee but I have question, is this, the evaluation do we have a contractor for that? Is there a bid or does it go through –

DOUGAN: This is our civil term engineer, one of our two on contract engineers they will be doing this per the hourly rates that are already in the contract.

THURSTON: So towns can piggyback?

DOUGAN: Absolutely.

THURSTON: Thank you.

MENSER: Crown Point is.

DOUGAN: Yes, Crown Point is right now.

BARBER: And you are on this committee.

THURSTON: Am I? I apologize.

BARBER: Is there any other questions. All in favor, opposed – carries.

DOUGAN: The second one is the same thing other than it's for Adrians Acres over Slide Brook in the Town of Keene and it's for just a little less money, $7,580 and in all honesty, that's due to over Slide Brook a little more rock in the stream verses Fisk which is a little more sediment soils can move but same otherwise.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN OR COUNTY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT AMENDMENT WITH SRA ENGINEERS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $7,580.00, TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES INCLUDING GEOMORPHIC EVALUATION FOR THE ADRIANS ACRES OVER SLIDE BROOK CULVERT REPLACMENT PROJECT LOCATED IN THE TOWN OF KEENE, WITH FUNDS TO COME FROM US FISH & WILDLIFE FUNDS. Pierce, Thurston

BARBER: Any questions, concerns? All in favor, opposed – carried.

DOUGAN: Number three would be a contract amendment, it's in an amount not to exceed $167,703.75. It would be to All States Construction. That's for the removal of the Forge Lane Bridge, the superstructure down here just getting out of town in Elizabethtown with funds to come from budgeted funds.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN OR COUNTY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT AMENDMENT WITH ALL STATES CONSTRUCTION, INC., IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $167,703.75, FOR THE FORGE LAND OVER THE BOQUET RIVER BRIDGE SUPERSTRUCTURE REMOVAL PROJECT, LOCATED IN THE TOWN OF ELIZABETHTOWN WITH FUNDS TO COME FROM BUDGETED FUNDS. Clark, Wood

BARBER: Any questions, concerns? All in favor, opposed – carried.

DOUGAN: I do have one more. I'd like to apply for a grant. It's called the Build Grant. It's a Federally funded grant. I'd like to apply to that to study the Ensign Pond issues, all the flooding that we've had there recently. It's a competitive grant application. I'm sure what our success is going to be but we obviously have a lot of photos, a lot of issues over the last really decade that I can turn in to show why this issue there that flooding we believe is bigger than just what's in our road right a way so I'd like a resolution to apply for that Build Grant.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS TO APPLY FOR A FEDERALLY FUNDED BUILD GRANT TO CONDUCT STUDIES ON THE ENSIGN POND ROAD FLOODING ISSUES. Stanley, Wood

BARBER: Questions, concerns?

THURSTON: A couple of questions on that. Do we know what the match is?

DOUGAN: It's 100%.

THURSTON: Hundred percent?

DOUGAN: It's 100% for the study portion.

THURSTON: Okay and do you need engineering completed in order to apply for the grant?

DOUGAN: No, we've done most of that in-house already along with our other but we will have to use an engineer firm consultant from New York State DOT's LDSA list that's the fifteen engineers that they have on contract. We will have to use one of those engineer firms if we get awarded.

THURSTON: If you get awarded so there's no upfront engineer costs?

DOUGAN: No

THURSTON: Thank you.

BARBER: Is there any other questions, concerns? So you'll have this drafted up for our regular meeting?

DOUGAN: No, I'm going to go ahead and apply for the grant to bring the resolution along but it's looking like it's going to be in the amount, the study is going to be approximately $430,000, a lot of that is survey work because again, at Ensign Pond Road we think the issue is the water and sediment that is coming at Ensign Pond Road from all those years owned by the state so there's a lot of work in surveying and we're going to prove that point.

MASCARENAS: Yeah and the way grant resolutions work it's really just to apply. So you get a second crack at it if we're fortunate enough to get the award technically we don't have to ask to apply because there's no changes to the budget. We like to so that you're informed the entire process and it won't be the first time you've heard it so you'll get another crack at it in terms of a budget amendment if we're fortunate enough to be awarded.

BARBER: All in favor, opposed – carried.

DOUGAN: That's all I had for resolution requests. I did give you a little bit of information on our gasoline, diesel and asphalt prices so realistically if asphalt stays where it is right now I'm projected that the amount of tons of asphalt we plan to buy are going to cost me an additional half a million dollars this year as to compared to what they were when I first did this in March. Right now it looks like we're, if diesel and gasoline prices stay where they are it looks like I would probably – based on normal usage I'll probably spend over $50,000 than I have in my budget right now. We're coming up with contingency plans in house but we don't need to punt yet but I wanted everyone to know that we're watching it. That's all. Other than that we start paving.

BARBER: Jim, over the weekend has the Governor announced what towns are getting for CHIPS money yet?

DOUGAN: Did they pass the budget? I haven't been following it.

MASCARENAS: I haven't seen it.

BARBER: I heard they had and then she asked for an extension?

DOUGAN: Until they pass the budget you won't get your CHIPS letter until they do so.

MASCARENAS: The closest thing I got is they have a deal but nobody knows what that is and the specifics of that deal are what matter to an awful lot of us, right so until they have a vote and it moves forward we're not going to know the specifics.

BARBER: Okay and then this morning I received a phone call from a Steve Mackay. Do you know him?

DOUGAN: Yup.

BARBER: So, he said to me, I heard you are a head of the DPW and I talked to Mr. Menser this morning a little bit about it coming in Crown Point –

DOUGAN: He owns the property on Bradford Hill Road where we had FEMA work up there.

BARBER: Okay and he elaborated to me he signed an agreement with you to do some work coming down –

DOUGAN: To give us access to the property from the FEMA damage that occurred yup.

BARBER: Okay so there was FEMA damage there?

MASCARENAS: Easement is what you're talking about.

BARBER: Yeah. He still has some concerns on coming down there with flash floods coming down that roadway.

DOUGAN: We're working with FEMA to try to get FEMA to fund us planting trees down that whole hillside, okay?

BARBER: Yup he mentioned that, the planting of trees.

DOUGAN: FEMA has said no so far unfortunately the bank that gave way is above the road, had the bank been below the road and a structural component FEMA would of automatically let us go further. FEMA isn't automatically letting us go further so we're still appealing that. The other thing that we're doing is with the Fish Hatchery closing, there was a structure in the middle of the fish hatchery, a bridge that's no longer needed so we're looking to take that approved FEMA project and turn that in to what is called an alternate project that will pay for those trees that we're asking for because they are all within the same watershed they are all immediately above Putnam Creek.

BARBER: Okay so I can just let him know that you're following up?

DOUGAN: Yeah, I can write that all out if you want and get something for him and out to him.

MENSER: What Mr. Barber stated to me earlier Mackay was complaining about stuff coming

down the White Church Road and possibly Breed Hill not Bradford Hill.

BARBER: He did say it was right after a White Church coming down the hill, coming into Crown Point so again, I'm unfamiliar. It would have to be his right of way because he did mention that he signed an agreement.

MENSER: Okay that would be on Bradford Hill.

DOUGAN: Yes.

MENSER: And that one I'm definitely aware of for a lot of reasons.

BARBER: Okay.

DOUGAN: For the board's benefit we did go to FEMA for this project, there was some work that the homeowner did, the property owner did prior to the event. He clear cut the property and he removed all the stumps on a very steep slope. What was the cause of the damage? Was it the storm or was it the work that was done before? Okay, so I feel we played pretty nicely to go once there was damage from the storm to go back and fix it. There possibly could have been other things that I would have recommended to this board what to do in such a situation but I chose to play nice. Doesn't sound like me does it Mike?

MASCARENAS: No.

MENSER: I've been amazed that the county did as much as they have.

MASCARENAS: You and me both.

BARBER: So is there a chance that it could be – if you don't get the funding to plant trees is there a chance because and I'm just elaborating what he asked if maybe it could be hydroseeded?

DOUGAN: We've done hydroseeding a number of times there.

BARBER: And it just washes?

DOUGAN: The best thing, there's a lot of erosion control of materials on that hill right now as we're trying to have it reestablished. We're trying to go the FEMA route to get the trees. We got an estimate of about $200,000 worth of trees there if we can get FEMA to approve it. I have not yet asked Alice for help but I may ask Alice for help in the future if FEMA isn't successful.

BARBER: Okay thank you.

MENSER: The problem with this there is no top soil left there just sand.

BARBER: Yeah from what he elaborated I kind of got that sense too that it was definitely because that was his concern with the heavy rains, when we get the heavy rains that the water really rushes down through there.

REUSSER: With the work that was done have you inquired a DEC permit? You don't need to answer that I'm just throwing that out there. I will mention Colin Powers, BRASS Executive

Director was able to apply for a grant to help me with planting on Roaring Brook.

DOUGAN: We want the establishment of trees there too. It's a steep slope above a county road okay, it's always going to be an issue. How the issue started but it's always going to be an issue so we want that too and we really didn't want to put in a giant wall to hold back that slope that was another potential option that would have been another asset that we have to maintain so our goal is to get trees, trying to go down the FEMA path right now if we can.

REUSSER: Well, they are back to work.

DOUGAN: Exactly and we were waiting for that for quite some time after the fish hatchery was closed was the first time we could go to an alternate project. They've been shut down for most of the time since that resolution was done so we are working on it.

BARBER: Okay thank you. Anybody have any other questions for Jim? Thank you. Alice, Soil and Water.

HALLORAN: Good morning. So we moved. That's exciting. We are happy to be in the new building. Still settling in polishing things up but feel free to stop by anytime and check it out. We're planning an open house with Cornell Cooperative Extension for June 25, you'll hear about it once we iron out all the details.
The north Adirondack regional Envirothon was held and the Soil Sisters from Minerva Central School won this year and they are going to head to the state competition in Cortland next week. We are having our environmental field days that's for I think fifth and sixth graders June 2 at the fairgrounds. We have one farm project going on and closing out a bunch of our farm grants from last year and waiting for the next CFA round to come out. Any questions?

MENSER: We are working with Jim Dougan on a FEMA project for the landfill on Middle Road in Crown Point and it's going to require re-sloping in the area and we are going to need to have that seeded and whatever trees and stuff so we're hoping we could get support from you guys to come down with your hydroseeder and take care of that.

HALLORAN: Definitely. Is that the place that had the failure a few years ago?

MENSER: Yes.

HALLORAN: Okay and do you know the timeline of when you think you're going to be needing it?

MENSER: I don't know because they are just getting ready to go out to bid. I just arranged for the easement on the neighboring piece of property over the weekend.

HALLORAN: Okay, yeah I'm sure we can help.

MENSER: Thank you.

BARBER: Any other questions for Alice? Alice, I've got one tire collection. Are you doing tire collection?

HALLORAN: We haven't planned one yet but we're hoping to plan one soon.

BARBER: Well, I'm hoping you can do one in Chesterfield. I've had quite a few constituents ask if there was going to be one.

HALLORAN: Okay.

REUSSER: I'm getting a lot of questions from people interested as well.

HALLORAN: Alright we'll try to set a couple up and let you know the when's and where's.

BARBER: Okay.

STANLEY: I guess since we're talking about tires I want to thank you for scheduled one for our Amnesty Day over the weekend it was extremely successful and Renee was great to just say, hey we need to stay until we're done. Thank you.

BARBER: Okay is there any other questions?

MASCARENAS: Alice, when the details of the open house are scheduled can you communicate that with Judy please just because I would like to make sure that some of the old board members that are no longer with us get invitations. They were the ones that kind of got it rolling, new board got it done but old board kind of did the ground breaking and those things and I would like them to get an invitation too.

HALLORAN: When I send an email to the supervisors email list, is Judy on it?

MASCARENAS: Yes, she is. That will work.

GARRISON: Thank you.

BARBER: Good thank you.

HALLORAN: Alright, thank you.

BARBER: Doreen, Transportation.

ABRAHAMSEN: Not much in the way of new news this time just basically my monthly report with my stats. MAS trips have gone up somewhat they usually do this time of year then they drop down because everybody is going on vacation. Still definitely looking for bus drivers. My part timers are starting to age out and I've got just about a continuous posting out there for part time bus drivers so that's always a need.

MENSER: I had spoken to one of the Judges in the county and they were asking about what we could do to make sure that the bus that transports people could start going to the probation office now that it is no longer here it's a much bigger hike.

ABRAHAMSEN: I've had several conversations with Probation and the Sheriff's department and social services regarding these things. We do now do a deviation so I have my driver come in a little early before the shift because we start at DPW and for anybody that needs to come from probation or jail we go out there whatever shift is closest to when they need to be picked up and we bring them to wherever they need to go usually they need to connect to another bus and the

same, I encourage when they release somebody we do the same. All it takes is a call to set it up. I can't just add the safety building to my schedule because it offends a lot it's not just a quick stop like we've done for the Amish up in Willsboro we just went around another road you know, those little things are okay but there's not enough steady riders. If they were to come up with a plan where all probation meetings were going to be at a certain time or if they have court they were going to be on a certain day even I could work with that a little bit more but at this time we do everything we can to cover their need as far as if we get a phone call from either the person that needs the ride or if they have a case worker, probation calls me a lot, the sheriff's department has called me. We are willing to bring drivers in or have stay late to do that deviation.

MASCARENAS: Just so everybody knows after the meeting last week Mr. Hughes and I followed up with our probation director. You know a lot of times things on the floor get said and we don't really understand it might be an isolated incident and we think it's a huge problem or we need to define the problem and exactly how many people is this impacting what's happening, how do we meet people? Bottom line is we meet a lot of people in the field. We are one of the few probation departments that still do that due to our geographic location. Now there are other things that don't allow us to meet in the field which are typically placed on the individual whose on probation that you need them in a secure area they might be a little more dangerous of an individual that requires them to come here specifically so you've got to understand there's a lot of things in play and what I can tell you is it's not consistent so, what we really need to figure out is a way that's cost effective if Doreen were to change her schedule daily to account for that issue there would be many days she would have nobody on that ride. The majority of the days there would be nobody on that ride so we got to really figure out the problem and the best way to solve it and what I can tell you is consistently inconsistent in terms of the need for that trip. The same problem existed quite frankly when probation was here the difference was there's a pickup at 8 and 4 but often there was a lot of hanging around until that bus left at 4 every day whether they had a 10 o'clock appointment or 9 o'clock appointment that's just kind of how it was so we are talking about it. Heather is gathering us better data on her end to let us know just how much of a problem this is and I think then we can come up with better solutions. There's a lot of different ways to attack that kind of thing from having a small satellite here where you have one office but again, is that going to account for people that want to pop in, have to meet deadlines those types of things that's very different so, we've got to figure out what the problem is or define the problem better before we ask Doreen to change everything she's doing to accommodate a small handful of individuals.

TYLER: I'm not on this committee but I'm just guessing, it's like with everything else that's going on with society nowadays people you know they commit a crime, they do things and they are always blaming other people for their problems and we've got a few people that can't make it to probation because they can't get a ride there you know, okay well, anyway I just wanted to make that comment.

BARBER: I agree with you.

MENSER: What I think would really help is that if we had really good communications between probation and transportation and that probation actually set up a schedule for people coming from other towns that don't have transportation and say look, this is when your probation meeting is going to be and the bus is going to be available on those days only so there will be no excuse for you not being on that bus.

MASCARENAS: Yeah and like I said there's a large amount of individuals that if they have a DSS case, DSS will figure it out and get them there because so many of our individuals that may be

involved in probation believe it or not are also involved in other services we provide and we can take advantage of some of those transportation opportunities so it's really all over the board whether it's mental health, whether it's DSS right those agencies do a fair amount of transportation for us ACAP sometimes has their volunteers that are available so it's a little bit all over the map in terms of how it's happening and there are people that fall through the cracks and those are the ones that we've got to identify and figure out how to provide a better level of service for those individuals but ultimately it's those individuals that Mr. Tyler is eluding to it's their responsibility to get themselves there. I mean, it really is.

MENSER: If we are telling them that we are going to provide the transportation this is going to be your appointment and you're not there for it you're going back to jail and I have no problem doing that.

ABRAHAMSEN: We've had these conversations like this and ultimately a lot of times like you're saying we have set up deviations and they don't show.

MENSER: Yeah that's when you send them back to jail. You don't have to do the deviation.

BARBER: Although then you've got to get your Judges to do that.

PIERCE: That would be court issued.

MASCARENAS: That's the issue.

BARBER: I know it's a big issue in the Town of Chesterfield.

STANLEY: So I brought this up when transportation was an issue before with our lawyers. Is it possible or does the meeting need to be in person or can they video conference in our town halls to the probation department like just a way to sort of, I feel like we're constantly trying to figure out how we can get somebody somewhere and one of the biggest geographically size counties in the state. I mean technology is there is that a way we can save money?

MASCARENAS: Yeah I think we always have to look at that. I don't think you're wrong. I think depending on the probationary and what the expectation of the court is would determine what is an appropriate meeting. So many of these individuals may have to get drug tested, weekly or monthly or that kind of thing we do know that that's our biggest issue in Essex County for those individuals that are on probation they share that problem so the answer would be no in that circumstance because the probation officer has to go over with them, they have to make sure they are at the hospital and they are appropriately being tested but, I'm sure there's instances where you absolutely can. Like I said earlier, our probation office is your court you know this, you've seen it. They are coming to try to be very good about accommodating the public's need because they recognize our geographic challenges we have in getting there so we need to identify who is this population, how many are there and why are they slipping through the cracks and how can we figure that out.

BARBER: So when that was done at a town level was the county providing a probation person?

MASCARENAS: Yeah, we still are. Like I said you'll see them in your courts and in your town you may not know who they are but they are there. So they are absolutely coming to your towns on a regular basis with their clientele they typically operate in conjunction with your courts so a

lot of times if your court is open on such and such a night there's a probation officer likely in the room that you may not like I said, recognize.

BARBER: Because I know in the Town of Chesterfield I used to have a probation officer that used to come in pretty regular and that no longer happens so are you saying that he's – if there's one there he's probably there on the court date?

MASCARENAS: Likely but I can get the exact schedule what probation officers are in what courts, what nights they are there those types of things.

BARBER: Could you do that?

MASCARENAS: Yes.

BARBER: I'd like to see that too.

BRASSARD: Not related to court but can you off the top of your head do you know was our skier shuttles, was that up riders this year? Down? About the same?

ABRAHAMSEN: About the same maybe a little higher but just about the same.

BRASSARD: That's all I need.

BARBER: Any other questions? We're adjourned.

As there was no further discussion to come before this DPW committee it was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk
Board of Supervisors